CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

SUNDAY ▸ JANUARY 4, 2026 ▸ VOL: 11 ▸ ISSUE: 170 ▸ PAGES 12 ▸ ₹2.00

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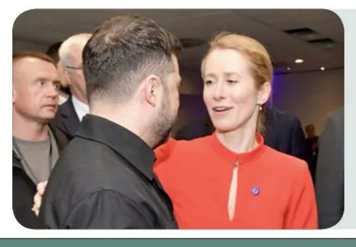

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US strikes Venezuela, Maduro and wife flown out of country

Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodriguez is in Russia, according to the reports, after President Donald Trump said President Nicolas Maduro had been captured by U.S.

CARACAS

The United States launched a major overnight strike on Venezuela early Saturday and claimed to have captured President Nicolás Maduro, flying him out of the country, to New York, US after months of escalating pressure on his government. President Donald Trump announced the dramatic operation on social media, though questions remained over the legal authority and whether Congress was consulted. The unprecedented move, reminiscent of the 1990 U.S. capture of Panama's Manuel Noriega, triggered shockwaves globally.

Russia condemned the action as an "armed act of aggression," insisting Venezuela must be free to decide its future without foreign intervention. The European Union called for calm, urging respect for international law while reiterating that it does not recognise Maduro's legitimacy and supports a peaceful transition.

Explosions and low-flying aircraft rattled Caracas during the brief but intense strike, which the Venezuelan government labelled an "imperialist attack." Vice President Delcy Rodríguez said Maduro's location was unknown and demanded proof he was alive. U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi said Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, would face criminal charges in American courts. Trump said Maduro is in New York, where he will face drugs and weapons charges in Manhattan federal court. Venezuelan authorities urged citizens to take to the streets, and armed civilian groups rallied in parts of Caracas. Meanwhile, uncertainty gripped the capital, with reports of casualties and power outages as investigations and global reactions continued.

Left parties in India strongly condemned the United States' "imperialistic" military strike on Venezuela, demanding an immediate halt to aggression and withdrawal of troops. CPI(M), CPI(ML) Liberation, and CPI accused the US of regime-change tactics, violating international law, threatening sovereignty, and seeking control of Venezuela's oil. They urged UN action, global pressure, and solidarity with the Venezuelan people.

REACTIONS BEING TO EMERGE

- Prime Minister Keir Starmer says the UK was not "involved in any way" in the US operation in Venezuela.
- China tells citizens in Venezuela to 'avoid going out'
- President of Colombia Gutavo Petro says troops are being deployed to the Venezuela border
- Brazil says U.S. crossed 'unacceptable line' over military strikes on Venezuela
- Venezuela accuses U.S. of bombing residential areas

The United States of America has successfully carried out a large scale strike against Venezuela and its leader, President Nicolas Maduro, who has been, along with his wife, captured and flown out of the country.

—Donald Trump, U.S. President

Siddaramaiah slams Centre for 'dismantling' MGNREGA

BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched a strong attack on the Modi-led BJP government at the Centre, alleging that it has undermined village-level governance and damaged the rural economy by diluting the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA). Addressing a press conference at Home Office Krishna, he said the Centre had replaced the existing framework with a new law without consulting states, calling it a "dictatorial approach".

He recalled that the UPA government under former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had empowered citizens through landmark legislations such as the Right to Employment, Right to Information and Right to Education. However, the new law, introduced in Parliament on December 17 and passed the next day with minimal discussion, has taken away crucial safeguards, he said. Across India, 12.16 crore people depend on NREGA, including 6.21 crore women. Karnataka alone has 71.18 lakh registered workers, more than half of them women.

Siddaramaiah said the earlier Act guaranteed local wage employment, strengthened village economies and legally assured 100 days of work, which have now been removed. He criticised the Centre for burdening states by changing the funding pattern to a 60:40 ratio and restricting employment to only government-notified areas. The denial of work during peak agricultural seasons, removal of inflation-linked wage revision and weakening of gram panchayat powers would destroy rural livelihoods and push people into distress, he warned.

CM Siddaramaiah cites data

India MGNREGA Workforce

- Total Workers: 12.16 crore
- Women Beneficiaries: 6.21 crore
- SC Beneficiaries: 17%
- ST Beneficiaries: 11%

Karnataka MGNREGA Workforce

Total Workers: 71.18 lakh
Women Workers: 36.75 lakh
Women Participation: 51.6%

Congress announces MGNREGA protests from January 10

NEW DELHI

Congress on Saturday launched a sharp attack on the Modi government, accusing it of pushing the country towards "Vinash Bharat" instead of "Viksit Bharat", and announced a 45-day nationwide agitation titled 'MGNREGA Bachao Sangram' beginning January 10. The party said the campaign will demand restoration of the original UPA-era MGNREGA framework and reversal of changes brought in through the VB-GRAM G Act.

According to Congress, the Centre has dismantled the "rights-based, demand-driven" nature of the rural employment scheme and converted it into a "supply-driven" programme that also forces states to bear 40 per cent of the financial burden. The party said it will consult Opposition-ruled states and explore every possible option, including halting implementation of the revised provisions.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the party is "clearly and unequivocally" demanding withdrawal VB GRAM G Act, restore MGNREGA and restore the right to work and panchayats' authority.

"Attacking MGNREGA is attacking crores of workers and their Constitutional Rights. We will resist, peacefully and firmly, from every Panchayat to Parliament," he said on 'X'.

Congress accused the Modi government of steering India toward 'Vinash Bharat' and announced a 45-day 'MGNREGA Bachao Sangram' demanding restoration of protections

R. Ashoka slams Cong over Kogilu housing allocation

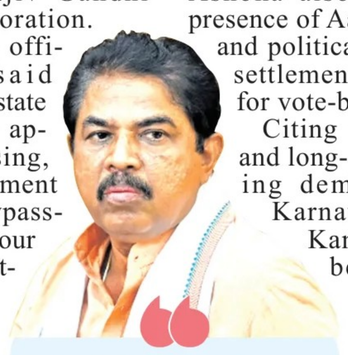
BENGALURU

Leader of Opposition R Ashoka launched a sharp attack on the Congress government, alleging that it is prioritising "Bangladeshi residents" over Kannadigas in the allocation of houses under the Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation.

After meeting officials, he said around 65,000 state residents have applied for housing, yet the government is allegedly bypassing them to favour occupants evicted from Kogilu Cross. Ashoka claimed many deserving beneficiaries, including elderly applicants, are still waiting despite paying full amounts, with several projects lacking basic facilities like water and electricity.

He accused the government of bending rules exclusively for Kogilu Cross and questioned the legitimacy of beneficiaries, insisting housing must follow proper verification, MLA committee scrutiny and eligibility checks. He demanded mandatory genealogy verification to ensure only genuine citizens receive houses. Ashoka also alleged the presence of Aadhaar rackets and politically motivated settlement of outsiders for vote-bank gains.

Citing flood victims and long-pending housing demands across Karnataka, he said Kannadigas were being neglected. He further criticised the Congress government over alleged deterioration of law and order, harassment of officials, and incidents leading to police suicides. Ashoka announced statewide protests on January 5 and said the party would pursue legal and legislative action against the decision.



Thousands of Kannadigas have applied and are waiting for houses. However, the Congress government is giving houses to Bangladeshi residents at Kogilu Cross. We will protest against this on January 5.

—R. Ashoka, BJP Leader

Pakistan backs China's claim of playing a role in Operation Sindoor

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has backed China's claim that Beijing played a role in defusing tension with India during Operation Sindoor, calling it "diplomacy for peace" that was part of international efforts.

Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said that the leadership of China was in constant touch with the leadership of Pakistan, and "had made certain contacts with the Indian leadership as well in those three-four days from May 6 to 10th and maybe prior to that and after that."

"So, I think those contacts, characterised by a very positive diplomatic exchange, contributed in bringing down temperatures and bringing peace and security in the region. So, I'm sure that the Chinese characterisation of mediation is correct," he said on Thursday while replying to a question about Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's claim that India-Pak tensions were among the list of hotspot issues "mediated" by China in 2025.

India has maintained that the conflict with Pakistan in May last year was resolved through direct talks between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of both countries' armies.

India has also been consistently maintaining that there is no place for any third-party intervention in matters relating to India and Pakistan.

Andrabi described China's claim of mediation as "diplomacy for peace".

"It was diplomacy for prosperity, for security, and this has been a hallmark of a number of international efforts that went into resolving that conflict in those three to four fateful days," he added.

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SC to deliver verdict on Jan 5 in Umar Khalid bail case

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court will pronounce its judgment on January 5 on the bail pleas filed by former JNU students and activists Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam, along with other accused in the 2020 Delhi riots larger conspiracy case. A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and N V Anjaria will deliver the verdict, which was reserved on December 10.

The accused have been in custody for over five years under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. While Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor General S V Raju opposed the bail on behalf of Delhi Police, stating the riots were a pre-planned attack on national sovereignty, senior advocates representing the accused argued that their speeches could, at most, amount to "unlawful activities."

The petitions challenge the Delhi High Court's September 2, 2025 order denying bail. The February 2020 riots claimed 53 lives and injured over 700 people.

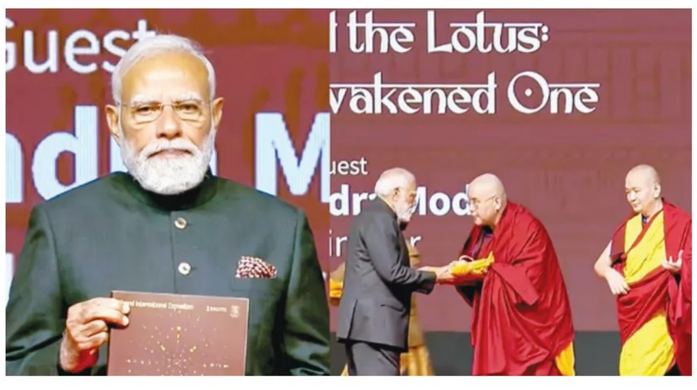
BUDDHA GEMS REPATRIATED

India unveils Piprahwa Buddha gems after century abroad

NEW DELHI

Sacred ancient gems associated with Lord Buddha were unveiled in Delhi on Saturday, marking their first public display since being taken during the colonial era. The Piprahwa gems — over 300 precious stones and ornaments believed to have been buried alongside Buddha's relics at a stupa site in northern India — were formally showcased at an exhibition in New Delhi.

The Ministry of Culture described the occasion as a historic reunion, noting that the relics have returned to India after 127 years. The gems, first excavated by British engineer William Claxton Peppe in 1898, had been dispersed worldwide over time. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the exhibition, calling it an emotional and culturally significant moment, saying the relics represent India's civilisational heritage rather than mere historical artefacts. Believed to date back to around 200 BC, the gems include caskets bearing inscriptions identifying them as Buddha's relics. Many were initially taken by colonial authorities, while others remained with the Peppe family, who attempted to auction them in Hong Kong in 2025.



'Shared heritage of humanity'

The gems, believed to date back to around 200 BC, were unearthed in 1898 by British colonial engineer William Claxton Peppe in Piprahwa, in Uttar Pradesh state. Indian authorities said an inscription on one of the caskets unearthed with the treasure confirmed the contents -- which include bone fragments -- as "relics of the Buddha".

QUICK READ

14 Maoists killed in two encounters

RAIPUR

Fourteen CPI (Maoist) cadres were killed in separate encounters with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma and Bijapur districts, marking the first major anti-Maoist action of 2026. Acting on intelligence inputs, District Reserve Guard teams launched operations in the Basaguda–Tarrem region of Bijapur and the Konta–Kistaram forests of Sukma, triggering prolonged exchanges of fire. Police officials said 12 Maoists were found dead in Sukma and two in Bijapur, and several weapons, including assault rifles, were seized.

KKR release Mustafizur Rahman from IPL 2026

KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders have released Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman from their IPL 2026 squad following instructions from the BCCI, which cited "recent developments" as the reason. The franchise confirmed the decision was taken after consultations with the board, which has also allowed KKR to seek a replacement in line with IPL rules. BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said the move followed a review of the prevailing situation. The decision comes amid political controversy over Rahman's inclusion.

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QUICK READ

Bengaluru tightens waste management

BENGALURU

In a significant move to tackle Bengaluru's long-standing garbage management challenges, the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML), functioning under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), has floated new tenders incorporating stringent rules and heavy penalties for inefficiency. The initiative aims to bring greater accountability and professionalism into waste collection and disposal across the city. The newly issued tenders divide the entire city into 33 packages, ensuring comprehensive coverage of all wards and zones. The tendering process has already commenced, and officials say the revised framework is designed to fix systemic lapses that have plagued solid waste management for years. Under the new norms, contractors will face monetary penalties for failures in cleanliness, discipline, and service delivery.

Father accused of poisoning two-year-old son

BENGALURU

In a deeply disturbing incident highlighting the devastating impact of financial hardship, a man has been accused of attempting to kill his two-year-old son by poisoning him due to severe monetary constraints. The accused, Munikrishna, is a resident of Huthandahalli village in Kolar district. The incident, which occurred on December 22 in Tamil Nadu, came to light only after the child was hospitalised in Bengaluru. According to police sources, Munikrishna, his wife, and their young son had travelled to the child's grandmother's house. On the night of December 22, Munikrishna allegedly administered poison to the toddler. The situation came to light when the child's mother and grandmother noticed something unusual while washing the child's mouth in the bathroom.

Government considers reviving student elections in colleges

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government is actively considering reintroducing student elections in colleges across the state, a move that could mark the return of campus democracy after more than three decades. Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil has indicated that if all factors align, student body elections could be conducted as early as this year. To examine the feasibility of the proposal, the state government has constituted a committee headed by Sharan Prakash Patil along with Higher Education Minister M. Sudhakar. The committee has been tasked with studying the possible framework, challenges, and safeguards required to conduct student elections in a peaceful and constructive manner.

Karnataka Cabinet meeting scheduled under CM's leadership

Government has scheduled a crucial Cabinet meeting in Bengaluru to deliberate on key policy matters

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has announced that an important State Cabinet meeting will be held under the leadership of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on January 8, 2026. The meeting is expected to play a significant role in shaping the administrative and policy direction of the state in the early part of the new year.

According to an official statement released by the government, this will be the second Cabinet meeting of the year 2026. The meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, January 8, and will commence at 11.30 a.m. It will take place at the Cabinet Hall of Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, the seat of the Karnataka legislature and executive administration.

State Cabinet meetings are considered vital forums where major decisions related to governance, development projects, welfare schemes, financial allocations, and legislative proposals are discussed and approved. The upcoming meeting is therefore expected to focus on several important issues, including ongoing development initiatives, implementation of welfare programmes, and administrative reviews across various departments.Sources within the government indicated that the Cabinet may also take stock of progress made on assurances given in the state budget and review the status of flagship schemes aimed at social justice, infrastructure development, agriculture, education, and healthcare. Matters related to inter-departmental coordination and policy reforms could also feature prominently during the discussions.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who has consistently emphasised inclusive governance and pro-people policies, is expected to chair the meeting and guide deliberations on key agenda items. Senior ministers from various portfolios will participate, presenting updates from their respective departments and seeking approvals where required.

The timing of the meeting is seen as significant, as it comes at the beginning of the year, setting the tone for governance priorities in 2026.

Wasim-Fakir colony residents reject BJP allegations

BENGALURU

Residents of Wasim-Fakir Colony in Kogilu Layout, Yelahanka, have strongly pushed back against claims allegedly made by leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party, asserting that they are being unfairly labelled and humiliated despite living in the area for years. Expressing deep anguish and anger, locals stated that while many residents in the colony are Muslims, none of them are from Bangladesh, contrary to what BJP leaders have claimed. Speaking emotionally, residents said that such statements have caused immense distress among already vulnerable communities. We may all be Muslims living in Wasim-Fakir Colony in Kogilu Layout, but none of us are from Bangladesh as the BJP claims, a resident said. They added that branding poor and marginalised people in this manner amounts to harassment rather than assistance. The remarks were reportedly made in the context of political visits and statements linked to local unrest following the death of Musina, an incident that has heightened tensions in the area. Locals said that instead of receiving empathy and support, they are being subjected to suspicion and public humiliation. The residents directly addressed senior BJP leader R. Ashok, stating that if leaders who are expected to come to the aid of helpless and poor citizens only end up worsening their suffering, then such visits are unwelcome. If those who are supposed to help us are going to humiliate us and create more trouble, then you should not come, the resident said, reflecting the collective frustration of the community.

'BJP has lost moral right to speak about Mahatma Gandhi'

BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar on Saturday strongly criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party, stating that its leaders have lost the moral right to speak about Mahatma Gandhi or associate themselves with his ideals. He said BJP leaders were no longer even fit to keep Mahatma Gandhi's photograph in their offices.

Shivakumar made these remarks while addressing a joint press conference with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at the Chief Minister's residence, Krishna, in Bengaluru. His comments came amid an ongoing political debate over the Centre's decision to remove Mahatma Gandhi's name from certain government schemes.

BJP leaders have lost the right to sit in protest before the statues of Mahatma Gandhi. They have also lost the eligibility to display his photographs in their offices, Shivakumar said. He questioned the moral authority of BJP leaders to speak about Gandhi after removing his name from welfare schemes. After deleting his name, what moral standing do you have to talk about Mahatma Gandhi or garland his statue? he asked.

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar launched a sharp attack on the BJP over Mahatma Gandhi's legacy.

In a scathing remark, the Deputy Chief Minister said BJP leaders should hand over the photographs of Mahatma Gandhi from their offices to those who genuinely respect him. Give us those photographs. We will keep them in our homes and offices where Gandhiji is truly honoured, he said. Shivakumar further stated that Mahatma Gandhi led the struggle for India's independence nearly a hundred years ago, and the nation is commemorating that historic legacy. At a time of such remembrance, removing his name is like killing him once again. There can be no greater insult to this country than this, he asserted. Shifting focus to another major issue, Shivakumar announced that a statewide, non-partisan movement would be launched against the proposed VBG RMG Bill, which he claimed would adversely affect the livelihoods of daily wage workers and rural development in Karnataka. He said the agitation would continue until the Central government withdraws the Bill.

Negligence of civic authorities puts residents at risk

BENGALURU

Public safety has emerged as a major concern in Nelamangala, with residents alleging gross negligence by municipal and related authorities. Nelamangala, often referred to as the gateway to Bengaluru, is witnessing increasing public anger as basic infrastructure failures continue to pose life-threatening risks to citizens. In recent months, the town has reportedly lost public confidence due to repeated accidents and poor civic maintenance. Two people were killed earlier in separate incidents linked to a roadside flex banner collapse and a dangerous pothole, highlighting the deadly consequences of official apathy. Despite these tragic incidents, residents say corrective measures have not been implemented, and the same pattern of negligence continues. One of the most alarming issues currently facing Nelamangala is the condition of electric poles along the main roads.

In several locations, particularly from Turmeric Kunte across the town, electric wires have reportedly lost their protective insulation, leaving live cables exposed. These uncovered wires hang dangerously from streetlight poles in the middle of busy roads, creating a constant risk of electrocution.

Govt has introduced e-Swathu 2.0 to make e-Khata services simpler for rural property owners

E-swathu 2.0 launched to simplify e-khata access

BENGALURU

In a major relief to rural property owners across the state, the Government of Karnataka has rolled out the upgraded E-Swathu 2.0 software, aimed at making property-related services more transparent, efficient, and citizen-friendly. With this initiative, people living in rural areas can now easily obtain e-Khata documents for their land and properties without facing procedural hurdles.

Under the new system, rural property owners can access e-Khata services digitally, significantly reducing the need for repeated visits to gram panchayat offices. The software enables automatic determination of gram panchayat service charges and mutation fees through the system itself, ensuring uniformity and eliminating discretionary practices. This move is expected to streamline property-related work and bring greater clarity in rural land administration.

One of the key highlights of E-Swathu 2.0 is the introduction of digital khata for rural properties. Owners of non-agricultural land can now obtain e-Khata more easily than before. Citizens can apply for and download property records while staying at home, saving both time and effort. The system also guarantees that E-Swathu forms will be issued within a fixed time frame.

To further strengthen accountability, the software includes a provision for automatic approval. If officials fail to approve applications within the stipulated period, the system will automatically grant approval, ensuring that applications are not unnecessarily delayed. This feature is expected to significantly reduce pendency and improve service delivery at the grassroots level.

Another important aspect of the initiative is that all properties under gram panchayat jurisdiction will now fall within the tax framework. The approval of the gram panchayat president has been retained in the e-Khata distribution process, maintaining local administrative oversight while leveraging digital efficiency. Additionally, uniform and standardised tax rates and service charges have been fixed across all gram panchayats, promoting consistency throughout the state.

CCB to seek court summons against X over non-cooperation

BENGALURU

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) police are preparing to approach a court to issue summons to social media platform X for failing to provide information related to accounts accused of harassing Vijayalakshmi, officials said.According to police sources, the CCB had earlier written to X seeking details of several accounts named in a complaint filed by Vijayalakshmi. The complaint reportedly included instances of obscene messages, online abuse, and sustained harassment. Investigators sought account-related data to identify the accused and proceed with arrests. However, the platform declined to share the requested information, citing its internal policies, police sources said.The lack of cooperation has significantly hampered the investigation, officials added.

After learning about the complaint, the accused allegedly deleted their social media accounts, making it difficult for investigators to trace them without backend data from the platform. Without timely access to account details, including IP information and account history, identifying and apprehending the accused becomes challenging, a senior officer said. In response, the CCB now plans to move a court seeking summons to compel X and potentially other social media platforms, to provide the necessary information and cooperate with the probe.

BALLARI SP RUMOURS

NO SUICIDE ATTEMPT BY SUSPENDED SP, CLARIFIES OFFICIALS

BENGALURU

Speculation surrounding the alleged suicide attempt of Ballari Superintendent of Police Pawan Nijjur has been firmly denied by senior police officials, who clarified that the reports circulating in sections of the media are completely baseless.

Rumours had emerged following the suspension of SP Pawan Nijjur in connection with the recent disturbance and firing incident reported from Ballari. It was widely claimed that the officer, distressed by his suspension, had attempted suicide by consuming sleeping pills at a friend's farmhouse in Tumakuru district. These reports triggered concern and widespread discussion across political and administrative circles.

However, Bengaluru City Crime Branch Deputy Commissioner of Police Sriharibabu, who is also a close friend of Nijjur, categorically denied these claims. Speaking to the media, Sriharibabu stated that Pawan Nijjur had not attempted suicide and that the news reports suggesting otherwise were false and misleading.

He explained that Nijjur had experienced a minor health issue, following which he was admitted to a nearby hospital as a precautionary measure. There was a temporary health concern, and he was taken to the hospital. At present, he is resting at a farmhouse near Sira and is stable, Sriharibabu said, urging the media and public not to believe rumours.

The misinformation reportedly began spreading soon after the Karnataka government issued an order suspending Pawan Nijjur late on January 2, citing dereliction of duty in relation to the Ballari incident.

Nijjur had assumed charge as Ballari SP only on January 1, making the suspension particularly sudden and controversial.

According to officials, rumours suggested that after seeing the suspension order late at night, Nijjur consumed sleeping pills in distress. These claims, however, were strongly rejected by those close to him. Further clarification also came from senior IPS officer Shobharani, who has been transferred from Ballari to Mandya as SP. She too confirmed that there was no suicide attempt and that she had personally spoken to Nijjur.

I have spoken to him directly. The news about a suicide attempt is untrue. He is currently resting at his farmhouse, Shobharani said, reinforcing the official version of events.

QUICK READ

Non-residential property tax revision drive conducted

Bengaluru

The Bengaluru West City Corporation conducted a non-residential property revenue revision drive on Wednesday in Malleswaram Division, Ward No. 64, along Margosa Road. The initiative was aimed at verifying property records, updating tax assessments, and ensuring accurate collection of municipal revenue from non-residential properties within the ward. The drive was carried out as part of the corporation's ongoing efforts to strengthen revenue administration and promote transparency in property taxation. Officials inspected several non-residential properties, focusing on whether the existing tax assessments accurately reflected the current usage and status of the properties.

Traffic police conduct road safety awareness program

Bengaluru

As part of its ongoing public outreach and road safety initiatives, the Adugodi Traffic Police Station conducted an awareness programme at PNS School, located within its jurisdiction. The visit aimed at instilling traffic discipline and promoting safe road behaviour among school students from an early age. During the programme, traffic police personnel interacted with students and explained the importance of following traffic rules in their daily lives. The officers highlighted key aspects of road safety such as obeying traffic signals, using pedestrian crossings, wearing helmets while riding two-wheelers, and fastening seat belts when travelling in cars. Special emphasis was placed on safe practices for children.

Defaulter's commercial properties sealed in K.R. Puram

East City Corporation intensified revenue enforcement, sealing dozens of commercial buildings in K.R. Puram for persistent property tax defaults

BENGALURU

In a strong move to enforce fiscal discipline, the East City Corporation carried out a large-scale revenue recovery drive in the K.R. Puram Zone, targeting commercial establishments that had failed to clear property tax dues for several years. The action was undertaken under the leadership of Zonal Joint Commissioner Dr. Sudha, reflecting the civic body's renewed focus on improving tax compliance and strengthening municipal revenues.

As part of the operation, officials inspected a total of 76 commercial buildings across the zone. During the inspections, 16 property owners cleared their pending property tax dues on the spot after being issued notices and briefed about the consequences of continued non-payment. However, the remaining 60 commercial properties, which had accumulated significant arrears over multiple years, were sealed as per municipal regulations.

Officials stated that the sealing of properties is a legally mandated step aimed at compelling chronic defaulters to regularise their payments. The drive was conducted in accordance with existing municipal laws, following due process that included prior notices and opportunities for property owners to settle their dues voluntarily.

According to sources in the revenue department, unpaid property tax severely affects the corporation's ability to fund essential civic services such as road maintenance, drainage systems, waste management, and public health infrastructure.

Property tax is a crucial source of income for the city. When commercial establishments repeatedly ignore their obligations, it places an unfair burden on compliant taxpayers, an official involved in the drive said.

The corporation has made it clear that this enforcement action is not a one-time exercise. Legal proceedings and further sealing drives will continue in the coming weeks to recover long-pending dues across other parts of the East Zone as well. Property owners have been advised to clear outstanding taxes at the earliest to avoid penalties, interest, and coercive action.

Eco-friendly boating planned for GBA lakes

Greater Bengaluru Authority plans pollution-free boating and nature-based lake development to enhance sustainability and public recreation

BENGALURU

In a significant step towards environmentally responsible urban development, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has initiated plans to introduce pollution-free, eco-friendly boating systems across lakes under its jurisdiction. The direction was issued by Chief Commissioner Shri Maheshwar Rao during a high-level review meeting focused on sustainable lake management and climate resilience.

The Chief Commissioner categorically instructed officials to rule out any fuel-based or polluting boating activities in city lakes. Emphasising the need to protect aquatic ecosystems, he called for the adoption of zero-emission boating models that do not harm water quality, fish populations, or birdlife. Electric and other non-polluting boating technologies are being explored as part of the proposed initiative.

Alongside eco-friendly boating, the lakes are planned to be developed as attractive public destinations in coordination with the Tourism Department. Officials said the idea is to balance recreation with conservation, ensuring that lakes serve as green leisure spaces while retaining their ecological integrity. Nature-based development will remain the guiding principle, avoiding excessive concretisation or commercial exploitation.

The meeting also focused on strengthening the role of lakes in flood mitigation. Authorities discussed the adoption of natural solutions such as improved wetland systems, better water retention mechanisms, and restoration of feeder channels to reduce urban flooding during heavy rains. These measures are expected to enhance Bengaluru's resilience to climate change and extreme weather events.

An innovative proposal discussed during the meeting was the feasibility of introducing ducks into select lakes. Ducks act as natural aerators, helping to improve water circulation and quality while supporting biodiversity. Experts noted that such biological interventions, if carefully planned, could complement conventional lake rejuvenation efforts.

The review meeting was attended by Special Commissioner R. Ramachandran, B-Smile Technical Director B.S. Prahlad, Chief Engineer Hemalatha, Executive Engineer Nithya, and other senior officials associated with lake development and urban infrastructure. Officials were asked to prepare detailed project reports, including environmental impact assessments and long-term maintenance plans.

Public awareness drive held under 'Road Safety Month'

BENGALURU

Under the ongoing 'Road Safety Month' programme, a special public awareness drive was conducted today to educate citizens about the importance of road safety and strict adherence to traffic rules. The initiative aimed at reaching road users from all sections of society, including pedestrians, two-wheeler riders, motorists, and public transport users. During the programme, officials interacted directly with the public and explained key aspects of safe road behaviour. Emphasis was laid on obeying traffic signals, following speed limits, using helmets and seat belts, and avoiding reckless driving. Citizens were also cautioned against common violations such as drunk driving, over speeding, using mobile phones while driving.

Police officers in Bengaluru were trained on traffic awareness, safety regulations, and smooth traffic management at a dedicated centre

Traffic awareness and road safety training conducted

BENGALURU

With the objective of promoting smooth traffic flow and enhancing road safety, a special training programme focusing on traffic awareness and safety regulations was conducted for police officers at the Traffic Management Centre in Bengaluru. The initiative aimed to strengthen the capacity of police personnel in handling traffic-related challenges while ensuring safer roads for all users.

During the training session, officers were sensitised to the importance of traffic discipline and proactive traffic management. Experts and senior officials explained various aspects of traffic regulation, including effective junction management, enforcement of traffic rules, pedestrian safety, and accident prevention strategies. Emphasis was laid on adopting a citizen-friendly approach while dealing with commuters and ensuring compliance through awareness rather than only punitive measures.

The programme highlighted the need for coordinated efforts to achieve seamless traffic movement in a rapidly growing city like Bengaluru. Officers were trained on modern traffic management techniques, use of technology in monitoring traffic violations, and data-driven approaches to reduce congestion and accidents. Practical demonstrations were also conducted to familiarise participants with real-time traffic handling scenarios.

Special focus was given to road safety education, stressing the role of police officers as key stakeholders in saving lives. Topics such as controlling overspeeding, preventing drunk driving, ensuring helmet and seat belt usage, and managing traffic during peak hours and emergencies were discussed in detail. Officers were encouraged to actively engage with the public to spread awareness about traffic rules and responsible road behaviour.

Officials from the Bengaluru Traffic Police noted that continuous training is essential to keep personnel updated with evolving traffic patterns and challenges.

Well-trained officers play a crucial role in ensuring smooth traffic flow and reducing road accidents. Awareness, alertness, and effective communication are as important as enforcement, a senior officer said. The training also underlined the importance of inter-departmental coordination and use of traffic management centres as command hubs for monitoring and responding to traffic situations across the city.

Vehicle topples near Kommaghatta on NICE Road

BENGALURU

Traffic movement was affected on the NICE Road stretch near Kommaghatta following an incident in which a vehicle toppled, leading to congestion and slow-moving traffic towards Kengeri. Commuters travelling on this busy corridor experienced delays, especially during peak movement hours.

According to traffic officials, the vehicle overturned near the Kommaghatta section of the NICE Road, partially obstructing the carriageway and reducing the smooth flow of traffic in the direction of Kengeri. As a result, vehicles were seen moving at a slow pace, with queues forming along the stretch.

Traffic police personnel rushed to the spot soon after receiving information about the incident. Efforts were initiated to regulate traffic and prevent further congestion. Crane services were arranged to clear the toppled vehicle and restore normal traffic flow at the earliest. Police officials also diverted vehicles intermittently to manage the buildup and ensure safety of road users.

While no official confirmation was immediately available regarding injuries, sources indicated that the situation was brought under control with timely intervention by traffic authorities. Commuters were advised to remain cautious while passing through the area and to follow instructions issued by police personnel on duty.

The NICE Road is a crucial arterial route connecting several parts of the city, including Kengeri, and even minor disruptions often lead to traffic snarls. Regular users of the road expressed concern over delays and urged authorities to expedite clearance operations to minimise inconvenience. Traffic police have appealed to motorists to plan their journeys accordingly and, if possible, use alternative routes until traffic normalises. Updates on the traffic situation are expected as clearance work progresses.

KSRTC announces ticket fare concessions from January 5

BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), regarded as the lifeline of public transport in Karnataka, has announced ticket fare concessions on several bus services operating from Davanagere. The revised discounted fares will come into effect from January 5, 2026, aiming to provide greater travel affordability and convenience to passengers.

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation has consistently introduced passenger-friendly initiatives, including affordable travel packages and route-based concessions. As part of its latest move, the corporation has reduced ticket prices on select long-distance and intercity services originating from Davanagere.

According to available information, the fare concession will apply to Volvo, EV Power Plus, and non-AC sleeper bus services operating on major routes, including the popular Davanagere–Bengaluru corridor. Several other routes connected to Davanagere are also expected to benefit from the revised pricing structure.

Officials stated that the decision was taken keeping in mind the rising travel demand and the need to make premium and sleeper services more accessible to passengers. The initiative is expected to benefit daily commuters, students, working professionals, and long-distance travellers who frequently depend on KSRTC services.

KSRTC has been proactive in upgrading its fleet with electric buses, modern Volvo coaches, and sleeper services while also focusing on affordability. The newly announced fare reduction aligns with the corporation's broader objective of enhancing passenger satisfaction while promoting public transport usage across the state. Passengers planning to travel from Davanagere on or after January 5 are advised to check updated fares while booking tickets through KSRTC booking counters, official websites, and authorised platforms. The corporation has urged travellers to take advantage of the concession and plan their journeys in advance.

Further details regarding route-wise fare reductions and exact ticket prices are expected to be announced shortly by KSRTC authorities.

Police impose restrictions in commercial hub

BENGALURU

Bengaluru City Police have issued prohibitory orders and traffic restrictions in select areas ahead of a scheduled police operation on January 4, 2026. The orders, issued under the Criminal Procedure Code, will be in force from 5 am to 10 pm to maintain public order and prevent untoward incidents.

According to the Commissioner of Police, movement of people and vehicles will be regulated in notified locations under specific police stations. The preventive operation targets commercial establishments and sensitive zones with high public movement.

As per the order, assembly of five or more persons, protests, rallies, or public meetings without permission are prohibited. Carrying weapons, inflammable substances, or materials disturbing public peace is banned, and shop owners have been asked to cooperate. Traffic diversions will be enforced to ease official movement and avoid congestion. Essential services are exempted. Violations invite action.

RURAL WASTE INITIATIVE

'Door-to-door waste collection is praiseworthy'

BENGALURU

Terming the initiative as commendable, expelled BJP MLA S.T. Somashekar said that the efforts of gram panchayats to collect waste by visiting every household in rural areas deserve appreciation. He was speaking after inaugurating newly procured waste collection vehicles by flagging them off at Doddabele village under the H. Gollahalli Gram Panchayat in Bengaluru South taluk.

The new vehicles have been introduced to collect and transport waste from Provident and Sunworth Apartments in Doddabele village.

Addressing the gathering, the MLA said the gram panchayat had taken up this programme with the objective of ensuring scientific and systematic waste disposal in villages by purchasing new vehicles. Such initiatives aimed at keeping rural areas clean and hygienic bring great satisfaction. Villages under the gram panchayat limits must be maintained in a clean and healthy manner, he said.

Somashekar urged gram panchayat staff to continue working with the same commitment and dedication. He emphasised the importance of creating awareness among the public about segregating waste at source. People must be educated to separate wet waste and dry waste at home itself. Only with public cooperation can we transform rural areas into clean and model villages in the spirit of the Swachh Bharat mission, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, H. Gollahalli Gram Panchayat President Nagesh said that special emphasis is being laid on making waste management convenient for rural residents. He explained that panchayat staff are visiting houses and providing bins to households so that wet and dry waste can be segregated at the source and handed over to collection autos. Creating awareness among the public about waste management is our first priority. In the coming days, segregated waste collected from households will be scientifically disposed of by the gram panchayat, he said.

The programme witnessed the presence of Congress Committee President Shivakumar Gowda, former Vice-President Patlappa, Rajappa, Yogananda, Panchayat Development Officer Kavitha, Secretary Vishwanath, and several other local leaders and officials.

QUICK READ

Ministers to offer bagina at Vani Vilas Sagar today

Chitradurga

Today (On January 4), Karnataka Planning and Statistics Minister and Chitradurga District Incharge Minister D. Sudhakar, along with local MLAs, will offer bagina at the Vani Vilas Sagar reservoir and later review the Bhadra Upper Canal project works in the district.

The ceremony will be held at 10:30 am at V.V. Sagar near V.V. Pura village in Hiriyur taluk. From noon, they will inspect construction works including the Chikkasiddavvanahalli canal, Kunchiganal aqueduct, bridge works, and the Gonuru bridge project. At 2 pm, the minister will address a press conference at the Bhadra Upper Canal office in Chitradurga, deputy commissioner B.T. Kumaraswamy informed.

Deadline extended for scholarship applications

Chitradurga

The deadline to apply for scholarships for children of Karnataka-origin ex-servicemen has been extended till January 15. Students from Class 1 up to final-year degree and diploma courses in the current academic year are eligible to apply, provided they are not already receiving scholarships from the Central Sainik Board or any other government scheme.

Application forms are available free of cost at the Department of Sainik Welfare and Rehabilitation office in Shivamogga. Filled applications must be submitted to the Deputy Director, Department of Sainik Welfare and Rehabilitation, Shivamogga, by January 15. For more details, applicants can contact the office during working hours on 08182-220925, said Deputy Director Dr. C.A. Hiremath.

Mandya officials urge collective action against child labor

District authorities emphasize citizen responsibility, education monitoring, and coordinated efforts to identify and rescue children from labor

MANDYA

Eradicating child labor is the responsibility of every citizen, emphasized District Commissioner Dr. Kumar. He urged enforcement officials to carefully monitor areas they visit daily and identify children engaged in labor.

Dr. Kumar addressed a training program on the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, and 2017 rules, highlighting that child labor is not merely undesirable but a serious social issue requiring decisive action. He stressed that both authorities and the public must act with commitment and maturity to eliminate this practice.

In 2025, over 35 child laborers were rescued in the district, and FIRs were registered in eight cases. Dr. Kumar clarified that a lower number of cases does not imply fewer child laborers and urged officials to inspect industries, hotels, and crushers for potential violations.

The education department plays a key role in identifying at-risk children. School headmasters should track students frequently absent or dropped out to understand their current situation. Surprise inspections are encouraged to prevent tipping off violators.

Children deprived of education and forced into labor are at risk of social harm; hence, officials must act vigilantly to rescue and rehabilitate them. Venu Varghese, State Coordinator of the Bachpan Bachao Andolan, emphasized including ESIC doctors during rescue operations and ensuring rescued children are placed under the Child Welfare Committee, not left unassisted.

Victims of abuse may receive compensation up to ₹3 lakh, and departments must coordinate logistics, including transport, to facilitate rescues. Dr. Kumar urged officials to collaborate and aim to make at least one taluk child labor-free, emphasizing that future large-scale training programs will guide actions to prevent child labor systematically. Present at the session were officials from the Labour, Pre-University Education, Urban Local Bodies, Social Welfare, and Backward Classes Welfare Departments.

Parent-teacher meet stresses supportive home environment

CHIKKABALLAPUR

Parents urged to create a supportive home environment as Koonabevu School emphasizes discipline, focused study, and collaboration for Class 10 students' success

At the Koonabevu Government High School, the second parent-teacher meet emphasized the critical role of parents in creating a conducive learning environment at home to help students achieve a better future. Headmaster S. Hanumantappa, presiding over the session, urged parents to actively support their children, especially Class 10 students, by limiting mobile phone use and keeping them away from distractions such as television. He emphasized that teachers' efforts alone cannot yield optimal results without parental involvement.

Teachers highlighted various initiatives at the school, including special classes, evening study sessions, and Sunday revision programs designed to strengthen Class 10 students' learning. Maruti Prasad explained that the education department has conducted three preparatory exams for Class 10, and subject teachers have already provided model answers alongside the officially released question papers. He requested parents to ensure that students practice these thoroughly at home.

Teacher S. Krishna noted that Class 10 marks a pivotal stage in students' academic lives. He urged both parents and students to focus on consistent effort and discipline, especially for students who may be academically behind, to secure strong educational outcomes.

The meeting was attended by SDMC president Kenchappa, members of the school management committee, teachers, and several parents, who actively participated in discussions on how to enhance student performance through collaborative efforts at school and home. The session concluded with a shared commitment to foster supportive home environments, ensure disciplined study routines, and strengthen the partnership between parents and teachers for the holistic development of students.

State Book Selection: Applications Invited

CHIKKABALLAPUR

The Karnataka State Book Selection Committee has invited applications for books published for the first time in 2025. Works in any language are eligible.

Publishers must register their books at the State Central Library, Cubbon Park, Bengaluru, by January 31, 2026, 5:30 pm.

A copy of each book must accompany the application. Late submissions will not be accepted. Guidelines and forms are available at www.dpl.karnataka.gov.in. For assistance, contact the library at 080-22864990 or 080-22867358.

District publishers can also approach the Chikkaballapur District Central Library. This initiative promotes quality literature and encourages recognition of regional and Kannada works.

KSRTC reduces bus fares from M'luru to B'luru

MANGALURU

The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has announced a reduction in bus fares on major services operating from Kundapura, Udupi, and Mangaluru to Bengaluru. The fare cut, ranging from 10% to 15%, is aimed at providing greater convenience and affordability for public passengers and will be effective from January 5, 2026, according to a statement from the Senior Divisional Controller of KSRTC, Mangaluru.

Passengers are encouraged to take advantage of these reduced fares to travel comfortably and economically between coastal Karnataka and Bengaluru. The fare revision applies across all major KSRTC services on these routes, ensuring better accessibility for students, professionals, and daily commuters.

The Senior Divisional Controller also noted that KSRTC continues to focus on passenger convenience, safety, and timely operations while offering cost-effective travel options. Travelers can plan their journeys accordingly to benefit from the reduced rates on these popular intercity routes.

The revised fares for different bus categories are as follows

- Ambari Utsava: Kundapura–Bengaluru ₹1510, Udupi–Bengaluru ₹1460, Mangaluru–Bengaluru ₹1350
- Dream Class: Kundapura ₹1350, Udupi ₹1300, Mangaluru ₹1200
- Multi-Axle 2.0: Kundapura ₹1310, Udupi ₹1250, Mangaluru ₹1150
- Multi-Axle: Kundapura ₹1110, Udupi ₹1060, Mangaluru ₹1000
- Non-AC Sleeper: Kundapura ₹1050, Udupi ₹1000, Mangaluru ₹900
- Pallakki Non-AC Sleeper: Kundapura ₹1100, Udupi ₹1060, Mangaluru ₹950
- Rajahamsa: Kundapura ₹750, Udupi ₹700, Mangaluru ₹650

South Kannada district-level govt employee's sports meet

MANGALURU

The South Kannada District Administration, in collaboration with the District Panchayat, Youth Empowerment and Sports Department, and the State Government Employees Association (District Unit), will organise the 2025-26 South Kannada District-Level State Government Employees Sports Meet. The event will take place at Mangala Stadium, Mangaluru, on January 13 at 9 am, while cultural competitions will be held the following day, January 14 at 9 am, at the Government Employees Hall in the city.

All permanent state government employees of South Kannada district are eligible to participate. Physical education instructors are also allowed to compete, but uniformed police personnel and government employees selected under sports reservations are not eligible. Staff from the Forest and Fire Departments (excluding those selected under sports quota) and clerical employees may participate. Participants must submit an official identification card issued by their departmental head.

All competing employees must report at the designated venues by 8 am on the day of their respective events.

For more details, participants can contact the office of the Assistant Director of Youth Empowerment and Sports at Mangala Stadium, Mangaluru (Phone: 0824-2451264). The event aims to promote physical fitness, teamwork, and camaraderie among government employees across the district while providing a platform for showcasing sporting and cultural talent.

Kadri fruit and flower exhibition from January 23

MANGALURU

The Department of Horticulture, District Administration, District Panchayat, Kadri Park Development Committee, and Siri Horticulture Association, Mangaluru, will jointly organise a Fruit and Flower Exhibition at Kadri Park from January 23 to 26, coinciding with Republic Day celebrations. The exhibition will feature artistic floral arrangements as the main attraction, showcasing creativity using flowers. Approximately 15,000 plants of 30 varieties, including Salvia, Chrysanthemum, Zinnia, Dianthus, Aster, Vinca, Cockscomb, Dahlia, Petunia, and Torino, will be displayed in pots. Vegetable garden demonstrations will also be part of the exhibition.

Visitors can see artistic displays highlighting the district's significance in fruit and vegetable cultivation, bonsai trees, Ikebana floral arrangements, and decorative plants. Various honey cooperatives and farmer producer organizations will display and sell honey varieties, value-added products, and share information on medicinal benefits.

Mandya officials direct timely payment for hamali workers

MANDYA

A meeting was held today under the chairmanship of the Mandya District Commissioner to address grievances of hamali (load–unload) workers engaged in the distribution of Anna Bhagya and other public ration schemes. The workers had raised complaints regarding delayed wages and irregularities in ESIC and PF contributions.

The District Commissioner emphasized the urgency of resolving these issues and issued strict directives for contractors and department officials:

1. Contractors must ensure timely lifting and distribution of food grains without delays.
2. Hamali workers' wages must be paid by the 5th of every month without exception.
3. Distribution under Anna Bhagya and other schemes must be completed by the 10th of each month.
4. Mandatory ESIC and PF contributions must be paid monthly, with records submitted to the office.
5. Employers are required to fully comply with PF regulations.
6. A complaint redressal system must be implemented to address hamali workers' grievances promptly.
7. Non-compliance will result in strict action against contractors, who were also warned to follow the instructions diligently.

The meeting was attended by Pratik J. Hegde, Deputy Director, Food and Civil Supplies Department, Mandya; district labor officials; lead bank managers; IDFC Bank officials; all bulk and retail transport contractors; and representatives of Karnataka Shramik Shakti Mandya and Karnataka Janashakti Mandya.

Officials stressed that these measures aim to protect the rights of hamali workers, ensure proper wage payment, and maintain efficient public distribution services. Compliance will be monitored strictly to prevent delays and irregularities in payments.

Bhima Koregaon victory celebrated in Kukkanuru

KUKKANURU

The annual Bhima Koregaon Victory Day, commemorating the bravery and sacrifice of Mahar soldiers, was observed across India on January 1, said Suresh Bhumareddi, President of the State Contractors' Association. He spoke at the program organized by the Humanitarian Forum Kukkanuru and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Youth Association, held in front of the statue of D.K.H. Patil in Shirur village, Shirur taluk.

Bhumareddi recalled the historic battle on January 1, 1818, near Koregaon on the Bhima River close to Pune, where 500 Mahar soldiers fought valiantly against a 30,000-strong Peshwa army. Their courage led to the defeat and retreat of Peshwa Baji Rao's forces, marking a decisive victory that symbolized resistance against caste oppression and injustice.

Speaking at the event, T. Ratnakar, District ST Congress President and Taluk Contractors' Association head, emphasized that the battle was more than a military victory; it was a struggle for equality, dignity, and social justice against centuries of caste-based discrimination.

The program also featured addresses by Kukkanuru Town Panchayat Chief Nagesh, Humanitarian Forum Regional District Director Bhimappa Havali, and poets and literary figures Shivamoorti Itagi, Shekarreddy Madinuru, and Suresh Gowda Shivanagowda, who highlighted the historical significance of the Bhima Koregaon victory.

Residents including Devappa Kumbara, Eeshappa Dodamani, Basavaraj Nayak, Veerendrareddy, Ramesh Valmiki, Eerappa, and Shankrappa Poojari paid tribute by offering floral tributes at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's statue. The ceremony was conducted with devotion, honoring the courage and legacy of the Mahar soldiers while reinforcing the values of equality and social justice for which they fought.

DISCOUNT ON KANNADA BOOKS

50% discount on Kannada book publications in January

CHIKKABALLAPUR

As part of the upcoming Republic Day celebrations, the Karnataka Kannada Book Authority has announced a special 50% discount on all its publications throughout January 2026. Officials have urged readers and book lovers to make full use of this opportunity to purchase quality Kannada books at highly subsidised prices.

The discounted books will be available at the Suriganudi Kannada Book Store located at Kannada Bhavana in Bengaluru (Ph: 080-22107705), as well as in all district-level Kannada and Culture Department Assistant Director offices. Additionally, the offer will be extended to every Suriganudi Kannada Book sales outlet run by the Kannada Book Authority across the state. Readers can also avail the same discount while purchasing books online through the Karnataka Book Authority website https://kpp.karnataka.gov.in.

The Kannada Book Authority has so far published a wide variety of literary works beyond mainstream Kannada literature. Its collection includes novels, plays, folk literature, health and medical books, historical and research-based works, children's literature, tribal studies, essays, agricultural guides and many other categories. Till now, the Authority has brought out more than 700 valuable titles, each recognised for literary merit, cultural relevance and educational importance.

The authority stated that the main objective behind this initiative is to make these rich and meaningful Kannada literary works accessible to the common public at affordable prices. The announcement emphasised that such efforts will help promote Kannada reading culture and encourage people to explore diverse fields of knowledge through literature.

GIVE LAND TITLES TO SHARAVATHI VICTIMS FIRST: MLA JNANENDRA

BJP MLA Araga Jnanendra urges Karnataka government to prioritize Sharavathi project victims' land rights before housing allocations

SHIVAMOGGA

BJP MLA Araga Jnanendra has urged the Karnataka government to first issue land titles and housing rights to families displaced by the Sharavathi project before allocating government flats to non-Kannada settlers allegedly living illegally in Bengaluru's Kogilu village. Speaking at a press conference in Shivamogga, he said thousands lost their homes and land over 60 years ago when the Linganamakki hydropower project

was launched to light up the state. Though the government relocated affected families between 1960 and 1970, most were never given ownership records, forcing many to build makeshift homes in remote forest areas, he alleged.

He criticised the government for demolishing illegal sheds in Kogilu and then declaring the occupants "victims" and offering them housing, calling it an injustice to genuine displaced families who have been fighting for land and homes for decades. He accused the Congress government of trying to appease its "vote bank" while ignoring Kannadigas still waiting for rightful land titles.

Jnanendra said even after a Supreme Court directive for a joint survey of Sharavathi rehabilitation lands, nearly 2,000 affected families were excluded, and officials have taken no corrective action. He warned that if the government distributes flats to Kogilu residents without first resolving the long-pending demands of Sharavathi victims and local applicants, protests will be launched. He demanded immediate action to provide land documents and housing to state residents and Sharavathi project-affected families.

Businesses must display 60% Kannada signage

MANDYA

Strengthening Kannada promotion, District Commissioner Dr. Kumar emphasized that all citizens must actively support the use of Kannada in public and commercial spaces. Speaking at the district-level Kannada awareness meeting, he stated that at least 60% of signboards in industries, commercial establishments, and private institutions must be in Kannada. Non-compliance may result in fines or license cancellation.

Dr. Kumar stressed that Kannada should be the first language in all schools, including Urdu-medium institutions, and parental support is vital for children to learn the language effectively. Authorities must ensure proper enforcement, including surprise inspections in factories, hotels, and commercial spaces. Special attention is required for online and offline communication, public signage, and official documentation in Kannada.

He highlighted recent achievements such as the successful 87th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Mandya and the construction of "Kannada Bhavan" to promote the language. Banks and government departments must ensure Kannada usage in files, notices, and public services. Out-of-state personnel should receive Kannada training, and local employees should be recognized for their use of Kannada in administration.

The Kannada Development Authority has prepared a handbook replacing common English terms with Kannada equivalents, and businesses must adopt these standards. Educational institutions are encouraged to implement Kannada libraries and ensure students sing the state anthem in Kannada. Violations of signage rules will incur fines starting at ₹5,000, increasing to ₹10,000 for continued non-compliance.

Dr. Kumar urged citizens, traders, and officials to embrace Kannada with pride, not fear, fostering respect and continuity of the language while ensuring local employment and cultural awareness. The initiative also celebrates 100 years of Kuvempu's Naadageete, with students participating in mass singing events to honor the legacy.

School bags distributed to students of govt school

CHITRADURGA

In Sondekere village of Aimangala hobli, Hiriyur taluk, 125 students from Classes 1 to 7 of the Government Higher Primary School received free school bags and stationery. The distribution was jointly organised by Bengaluru-based Youth for Seva and the Persistent Foundation. School Headmaster B. Kanthababu, SDMC President Lingaraju, Persistent Foundation representative Venkatesh, SDMC members, and local leaders including O. Manjunath and JCB Manjunath were present during the programme. The initiative aimed to support rural students and encourage education by providing essential learning materials.

Training on animal husbandry activities for farmers

MANGALURU

The Animal Husbandry Department of South Kannada district is organising training sessions on animal husbandry activities for interested farmers in January 2026 at the Kodiyal-Bail Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Training Centre, Mangaluru.

Details of the training: Modern dairy farming techniques will be taught from January 16 to 17, while sheep and goat rearing training is scheduled from January 28 to 29.

Farmers interested in participating can register by contacting their respective taluk officials. Contact numbers include Mangaluru – 9243306956/0824-2950369, Ullal – 9880424077, Mulki – 8971024282, Moodbidri – 7204271943, Bantwal – 9448253010, Beltangadi – 9481963820, Puttur – 9483920208, Kadaba – 9483922594, and Sulya – 9844995078.

The Chief Veterinary Officer (Administration) of the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department has encouraged farmers to take advantage of these sessions to gain practical knowledge, adopt modern techniques, and improve livestock productivity in the district.

VHP, Bajrang Dal workers booked in Chikkamagaluru

CHIKKAMAGALURU

In a controversial incident at Moodigere town, nine workers of the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal were booked by local police after allegedly conducting unauthorized checks on laborers of Assam origin, amid suspicions that they were illegal migrants. The incident has raised serious concerns over harassment and misuse of authority.

The background to the incident stems from a recent murder of a Hindu youth in Bangladesh, after which VHP and Bajrang Dal leaders held a press briefing in Moodigere, claiming that several workers in the area's coffee plantations, who were allegedly from Bangladesh, were being employed as Assam-origin laborers and receiving shelter. They urged the police and district administration to verify all records of supposed illegal Bangladeshi migrants and take action within a week.

Acting on their own initiative, the group reportedly stopped several Assam-origin workers at a local weekly market (sante) last Friday evening. They allegedly demanded and examined Aadhaar cards and other personal documents, asserting that many were forged, and allegedly threatened and harassed the workers.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SYED KABEER AHMED**, S/o, Syed Ahamed, Resident of No 314 6th Cross Leelavathi Extension Maddur Mandya Dist,571428, have changed my name to **SYED KABEER AHAMED**, vide affidavit dated: 03.01.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **RIZWAN BASHA**, S/o. Subhan, Resident of No.23, A 5th Cross, 1st Main Road, Valmikinagar, Mysore Road, Bengaluru-560026, I have changed my father name from **ABDUL SUBHAN** to **SUBHAN**, Due to Aadhar Card 214471717017, Pan Card No. HGFPB0007Q, Voter Card No.RSG3342532 that i will continue my father name as SUBHAN, Vide Affidavit Dated: 03.01.2026 Before Notary R. BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SYED SHARIQ AHMED**, S/o, Syed Kabeer Ahamed, Resident of 6th Cross Leelavathi Extension Madduru Town Maddur Mandya Dist,571428, have changed my name to **SYED SHARIQ AHAMED**, vide affidavit dated: 03.01.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact:
080-41209042

Government of Karnataka
Office of The Project Co-ordinator Officer, Integrated Tribal Development Department, Chikkamagaluru Dist.
Zilla Panchayat Building, Room No. - 26, First Floor, Jyothi Nagara 577102
Phone: 08262-220779 e-mail: itdpchikmagalur@gmail.com
No.: TXPC/TXSF/CR-11/2025-26 Date: 31.12.2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited through e-procurement from eligible person/ firms for supply of Food Items and Other Materials to Pre-Matric/ Post-Matric and Ashrama School Hostels of Integrated Tribal Development Project Department in the limits of Chikkamagaluru District for the year 2025-26 & 2026-27 and can participate in the Tender through e-procurement portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Approx. amount of Tender is Rs. 1300.00 lakhs. Last date for submission of Tender through online: 07.01.2026 up to 5.00 PM. Further information can be obtained from this office during office hours and by logging on to website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Project Co-ordinator Officer, Integrated Tribal Development Project, Chikkamagaluru.

DIPR/ckm/No.131/25-26/ksmca/1527

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, DODDABALLAPURA.
CRL.MISC.NO.488/2025.
BETWEEN: **Petitioners 1. Badrunnisa, 2. Sadiqh Ahmed hussain, 3. sadiqha, 4. Asma M.**
V/S
Respondents: Birth and death registrar City muncipal corporation Doddaballapura
SUMMONS TO INTERESTED PERSON U/O V RULE 20(A) R/W SEC 151 OF CPC
Whereas the above petitioners have instituted above petition to get the death certificate of their deceased mother by name Fathima B who died on in house # 1456, Ward no.21, Doddaballapur town 10/05/1994 on the file of Civil Judge and JMFC at Doddaballapura. The interested persons are hereby summoned to appar in this court in person or by pleader instructed and able to 07.02.2026 and answer all material questions relating to the above petition on interested persons are directed to produce all documents upon which you are intended to rely in support of your defence.
By order of the court
Chief Ministerial Officer Civil Judge Court, Doddaballapura
Rakshith, Advocate, Doddaballapura

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, DODDABALLAPURA.
CRL.MISC.NO.479/2025.
BETWEEN: Petitioners- 1. Sadiq Ahmed Hussain, 2. Sadiqha, 3. Asma M.
V/S
Respondents: Birth and death registrar City muncipal corporation Doddaballapura
SUMMONS TO INTERESTED PERSON U/O V RULE 20(A) R/W SEC 151 OF CPC
Whereas the above petitioners have instituted above petition to get the death certificate of their deceased mother by name Sajida Bhanu who died on in house # 1456, Ward no.21, Doddaballapur town 05/11/2001 on the file of Civil Judge and JMFC at Doddaballapura. The interested persons are hereby summoned to appar in this court in person or by pleader instructed and able 07.02.2026 and answer all material questions relating to the above petition on interested persons are directed to produce all documents upon which you are intended to rely in support of your defence.
By order of the court
Chief Ministerial Officer Civil Judge Court, Doddaballapura
Rakshith, Advocate, Doddaballapura

Government of Karnataka
Public Works Department
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Mysuru Division, Mysuru.
E-mail: eepwdmys21@gmail.com
Phone No. & Fax No. 0821-2420810
IFT No. 28/2025-26 **Dt.29.12.2025**

ITEM WISE SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, Executive Engineer, Public Works Department has published item wise Tender notification for a work approved under H/A: 4059-80-051-0-60-132-CMIDP 09 works under this division with KW- 4 Conditions & Regulations with Two cover systems. The **Minimum Amount Put to Tender is Rs.194.10 Lakhs and EMD amount is Rs.2.91 Lakhs.** The **Maximum Amount Put to Tender is Rs.719.07 Lakhs and EMD amount is Rs.10.79 Lakhs.** For Sl.No:01 to 09 Pre bid Meeting will be held in the undersigned office **at 11.00 A.M on 07.01.2026. For Sl.No:1 to 6** Tenders shall be Submitted in KPP-Portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) from 30.12.2025 to 15.01.2026** For **Sl.No:7 to 09 from 31.12.2025 to 16.01.2026 within 17.00 PM.** KPWD Class-III & above Contractor Registered in KPP-Portal are eligible. More details can be obtained from the office of the under Signed during office hours. Any amendments or modifications in tender notification will be published in KPP-Portal Only.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Public Work Department Mysuru Division, Mysuru

DIPR/DDMYS/1463/KSMCA/832/2025-26

e-Tender Notification

The tender are invited in Two Cover System as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through e-Tender of Government of Karnataka website for Supply/Installation/AMC of following items required to the Joint Commissioner of Police Traffic, Bengaluru.

Sl No	Tender No	Particulars	Last date submission for tenders
1	KSP/2025-26/IND0482	Supply, Installation & Maintenance of ALIB's to Bengaluru city Traffic Police	15/01/2026

For further details of the tender and the tender documents can be obtained for the public procurement portal.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
MINOR IRRIGATION & GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
M.I. & G.W.D. DIVISION, KALABURAGI.
PHONE : 08472 -220196, E-mail : midnglb@rediffmail.com / midnglb1@gmail.com
IFT No. EE/MI &GWD D/KAL/PB-2/2025-26/3989 DATED : 02-01-2026

:: SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (IFT KW-4) ::

1) Detail of Work: THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, M.I. & G.W.D. DIVISION, KALABURAGI INVITES TENDER FROM THE ELIGIBLE TENDERERS FOR THE WORK UNDER 4702.A.P.B, FOR THE YEAR 2025-26, 2) Amount of Estimate : **Max. Rs. 763,78,805.64 Min. Rs. 763,28,189.45,** 3) Eligibility of Contractor: Class-I, 4) Details of Tender Application Amount and EMD Amount: Tender Fee As Per KPP Portal E.M.D. Max. Rs. 11,45,700.00 Min. Rs. 11,45,000.00, 5) Pre-Bid Meeting Date & Time : **20-01-2026 Upto 11.00 Hours,** 6) Last Date & Time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications : **21-01-2026 Upto 11.00 Hours,** 7) Last Date & Time for Receipt of Tenders : **22-01-2026 Up to 17.30 Hours,** 8) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid: **23-01-2026 Up to 17.30 Hours,** 9) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid : **27-01-2026 Up to 11.00 Hours,** 10) Addl. information: Executive Engineer, M.I. & G.W.D. Division, Kalaburagi, 11) Address of E-Portal.: **(https:// kppp.Karnataka.gov.in)**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground Water Development Division, Kalaburagi

DIPR/Kalaburagi/932/KSMC&A/2025-26

KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD
3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009. Ph : 080-22273511-16.

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Karnataka Housing Board invite tender through Karnataka public procurement portal for below mentioned work.

Sl. No	Name of Work	Work Indent & IFT No.	Amount put to Tender (in Rs.)	Last Date for Submission of Bid
1.	Providing 1 No of 11 KV MCVCB Switchgear for arranging power supply to KHB layout behind DC office, Koppal District.	KHB/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT 686 & IFT No. 133/2025-26, Date: 02.01.2026	36,74,610/-	17.01.2026 upto 4.00 PM

For further information, contact below mentioned office address: Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru, **Telephone No. 080-22273511/ 080-22100077 website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board,Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/4851/Zen/2025-26

MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LTD. — MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LIMITED
FORMERLY MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE PVT LTD
CIN : U65923KL2010PLC039179
Regd Office: IV/470A (OLD) W/638A (NEW) Manappuram House Valapad Thrissur, Kerala 680567
Corp Office: Manappuram Home Finance Limited, Third Floor, Unit No. 301 to 315, A Wing, 'Kanakia Wall Street', Andheri-Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai-400093, Maharashtra. **Phone No.:** 022-66211000, **Website:** www.manappuramhomefin.com

DEMAND NOTICE

Whereas the Authorized Officer of Manappuram Home Finance Ltd., having our registered office at IV/470A (old) w/638A (new), Manappuram House, Valapad, Thrissur, Kerala-680567 and branches at various places in India (hereinafter referred to as "MAHOFIN") is a Company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 and a Financial Institution within the meaning of sub-clause (iv) of clause (m) of sub-section (1) of Section 2 of the Securitization and Reconstruction of financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred so as the Act) read with Notification No. S.O. 3466 (E) dated 18th December, 2015 issued by the Govt. of India, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, New Delhi, inter alia carrying on business of advancing loans for construction and / or purchase of dwelling units and whereas the Borrower / Co-Borrowers as mentioned in Column No. 2 of the below mentioned chart obtained loan from MAHOFIN and whereas MAHOFN being the secured creditor under the SARFAESI Act, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 2 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued demand notice calling upon the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers as mentioned herein below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notices with further interest thereon within 60 days from the date of notice, but the notices could not be served upon some of them for various reasons. That in addition thereto for the purposes of information of the said borrowers enumerated below, the said borrowers are being informed by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name Of The Borrower/ Co-Borrower/Lan/Branch	Description Of Secured Asset In Respect Of Which Interest Has Been Created	Npa Date	Date Of Notice Sent & Outstanding Amount
1	Sudha, Mohana, Shambu, Indira, **/MLAP0051042829/** Shimoga	All That The Piece or Parcel of Site Along With Structure Standing There Under Property Bearing Property No. 40-514-829, Old Property No. 40-514-310, Assessment No. W19-358-358-Nino-358, Measuring Total 54 Sq. Meter, Including 11.891584 Building, Situated At Ward No. 19, Ramanagara, Sagara, Sagara City, Within The Jurisdiction of Sagara Municipality, Shivamogga District, Karnataka, Pin: 577401. East-Site No. 396, West-Municipal Road, South-Site No. 359, North-Site No. 357	12-11-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.416888/-
2	Manjula G, Vijay K, **/MHL00900005226/** Vivekananda Circle	All That Piece And Parcel of Property Bearing No. 156/170 Unique No 150800200300820144 Situated At Kunagalli Village Kannegala Panchayathi Gundlupete Taluk Chamarajanagara Dist., Karnataka - 571111 Measuring East To West: 7.01 Meters And North To South: 12.04 Meters,. East-Galli, West-House of Mallikarjuna, South-Road, North-House of Nagarajappa	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.245592/-
3	Lakshmidevamma V, Manjunatha V, Venkatesh N, **/MHL00930008374/** Tumkur	All That Piece And Parcel of The House Bearing Residential Building Bearing Grama Panchayath Khatha No. 56/58/1/A And E-Khatha No. 15030030160 1220003 (Formed In Sy. No.37) Measuring East To West: 10.6680 Mtrs And North To South: 10.0584 Mtrs Is Situated At Mukkadighatta Village, Thubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, Karnataka, Pin: 561205. East-House Belong To Munirathnamma, West-Road, South-Property Belong To Nalina W/O Mariyappa, North-Property Belong To Srinivasa Chare	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.347036/-
4	Suma P, Mahendra H B, **/MHL00920010010/** Vinayanagar Ramnagara	East To West: 7.62 Mtr And North To South: 23.77 Mtr., Item No. 1: All That Piece And Parcel of The Property Bearing No. 87 Unique No. 15210030390100166 Kiragavalu Hobli Hullegala Mandya Hullegala Indian Mandya Karnataka-571430 & Item No. 2: All That Piece And Parcel of The Property Bearing No. 87/1 Unique No.152100303900100397 Kiragavalu Hobli Hullegala Mandya Hullegala Indian Mandya Karnataka-571430. East-Item No. 1: Own House/Item No. 2: Chikkathayamma House, West-Item No. 1: Basavanna & Walkable Road/ Item No. 2: Own House, South-Item No. 1: Basavanna & Marimadappa Vacant Site/Item No. 2: Basavanna & Marimadappa Vacant Site, North-Item No. 1: Road/Item No. 2: Road	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.359313/-
5	Lalithamma N, Girish Nayaka R, **/MHL00900010308/** Vivekananda Circle	Measuring East To West: 9.14 Meters And North To South: 8.53 Meters, All That Piece & Parcel of The Property Bearing Panchavalli Gramapanchayathi Property No. 82/1 As Per From No. 11B Unique 15220060161030351 Situated At Panchavalli Village And Periyapatana Taluk, Mysore, Karnataka, Pin: 571105. East-Road, West-Site No. 1/P8 Land, South-Site No. 1/P8 Land, North-Site No. 1/P8 Land	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.352270/-
6	Kusuma P, Papojirao Y, **/MHL00910016470/** Hassan	All That Piece And Parcel of The Site And House Property Bearing No. 151600402101020006, Gram Panchayath Property No. 47, Situated At Thattekere Village, Madaghatta Gram Panchayath, Belur Taluk And Hassan District, Totally Measuring 222.97 Square Meters, Hassan, Karnataka, Pin: 573215. East-Property Belongs To Sri. TS Raj, West-Property Belongs To Sri. Eroji Rao, South-Government Property, North-Road	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.323022/-
7	Madegowda M T, Thimmegowda N, Yashodamma T, Santhosh M T, **/NHL00910028389/** Hassan	All That Piece And Parcel of The Site And House Property Bearing No.151600701200420010 Gram Panchayath Property No. 130, Survey No. 8/4A3, And Property Situated At, Malenayakanahalli Village, Bidarakka Gram Panchayath Holenarasipura Taluk Hassan District., Totally Measuring 242.48 Square Meters, Constructed Plinth Area 242.48 Square Meters, Karnataka, Pin: 573136. East-Road, West-House Property of Sri. Karigowda, South-House Property of Smt. Jyothi, North-Road	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.428503/-
8	Nagamma V, Y E Prasanna, Eshwarachari Y, **/MHL00910028555/** Hassan	All That Piece And Parcel of The Site And House Property Bearing No. 151600300100100224, Gram Panchayath Property No. 638, Situated At Yalagathavalli Village, Yalagathavalli Gram Panchayath, Arakalagud Taluk And Hassan District, Totally Measuring 59.27 Square Meters, Karnataka, Pin: 573102. East-House Property of Sri. Y C Kalegowda, West-Own Property, South-Vacant Property, North-Road	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.177049/-
9	Ashraf Taj, Mahamed Abed, Suhan M, **/MHL00930031041/** Tumkur	All That Piece And Parcel of The House Bearing Katha No. 118 And E-Katha No. 152501000401900589 Measuring East To West: 7.62 Meters And North To South: 9.7536 Meters, Situated At Sampige Hosahalli Village, Dandinashivara Hobli, Turuvekere Taluk, Tumkur District, Karnataka, Pin: 572225. East-Property of Asin Sab, West-Galli & Rajiyabanu, South-Panchayathi Road, North-Property of Aliyamad	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.353534/-
10	Yogananda, Rupa, Sanjivappa, Nagalakshmamma, **/NHL00930040055/**Tumkur	All That Piece And Parcel of The Residential Vacant Site Bearing Grama Panchayath Khatha No. 59/64 And E-Khatha No. 152500500800100073 Measuring East To West: 6.4008 Mtrs And North To South: 13.1064 Mtrs Is Situated At Chowlahalli Village, I.D. Halli Hobli, Madhugiri Taluk, Tumkur District, Karnataka, Pin: 572124. East-Site Belongs To Siddaiah, West-House Belongs To Anjinappa, South-House Belongs To Ramesh, North-Road	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.113782/-
11	Manjunath K S, Nagamani K N, Mahalakshmamma, Ravi Kumar K R, **/NHL00930042183/** Tumkur	All That Piece And Parcel of The Residential Building Bearing Municipal Khatha No. 1623/1480 And P.I.D. No.19-2-195 Measuring East To West: 4.572009 Mtrs And North To South: 9.144018 Mtrs Is Situated At Ward No. 7, Kote Bedi, Koratagere, Tumkur, Karnataka, Pin: 572129. East-Road, West-Municipal Property, South-House Belongs To Ashwathappa, North-House Belongs To Rangashyamaiah	15-12-2025	16-12-2025 & Rs.430575/-
12	Sanjith S N, Sachin S N, Keerthi H N, Indra S, Nagesha Y, **/NHL00910025687/** Hassan	All That Piece And Parcel of The Site And House Property Bearing No. 152100500701120018, Gram Panchayath Property No. 283, In Survey No. 2/27 Situated At Sathenahalli Village, Honnavara Gram Panchayath, Nagamangala Taluk And Mandya District, Totally Measuring 172.61 Square Meters., Karnataka, Pin: 571802. East-Property Belongs To Smt. Gowramma, West-Property of Sri. Thimmegowda, South-Road, North-House Property of Sri. Jayaramegowda	13-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.982729/-
13	Kumara M N, Bhagya K, Basavaraju B, **/NHL00900003615/** Vivekananda Circle	That Piece And Parcel of Property Bearing Mayigowdanahalli Gramapanchayathi Property No. 77/1 As Per From No. 9 And 11A Unique No. 152200303108800106 Situated At Mayigowdanahalli Village, K R Nagara Taluk, Mysore, Measuring: East To West: 8.22 Meters And North To South: 29.41 Meters In Karnataka, Pin: 571617. East-House of Chinnaswamychar, West-House of Nanjamma Sannasiddashetty, South-Road, North-Property of Srikantaradhya	16-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.542239/-
14	Mahesh M, Putta Sidamma M, Mahadeva M, **/NHL00900003970/** Vivekananda Circle	All That Piece And Parcel of The Property Bearing No. 79, P.I.D. No. 150800303000400089, Situated At Silkalpura Grama, Tagarapura Gramapanchayat, Kollegala Block, Chamarajanagara (D). Measuring; E-W 9.144 Meter N-S 12.192 Meters, Karnataka, Pin: 571442. East-Govt. Property, West-Property of Maraiah, South-Road, North-House of Maneiaiah	16-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.353846/-
15	Shivamma R, Shiva Madu C, **/MHL00900011300/** Vivekananda Circle	All That Piece & Parcel of The Property Bearing No. 39/34 Unique No. 152200701508900311 Doddabagilu Village, Doddabagilu Gramapanchayat, T Narasipura Taluk Mysore District, Karnataka, Pin: 571120 Total Measuring 185.81 Square Meters. East-House of Kullaiah, West-House of Maddaiah Nigamma, South-Road, North-House of Shilanigaraju	16-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.373975/-
16	Krutika Anil Jadhav, Anil Chandru Jadhav, Chandru Jadhav, Ratna Chandru Jadhav, Manjunath Basavant Tinekar, **/MHL00260042333/** Hubli	Gramthana Property No. 4, Property No. 151300300100400112, Total Measuring 219.42 Sq. Mtr., Hulaginakoppa Village, Tambur Gram Panchayat, Tq: Kalaghatagi Dist: Dharawad, Karnataka, Pin: 581204. East-Property of Yashavant R Chikkalagi, West-Property of Mohammed Hanif K Shiggavi, South-Govt. Road, North-Property of Pundalik Chikkalagi	16-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.520854/-
17	Kantharaja D M, Chithra T, Sushilamma, **/NHL00510045974/** Shimoga	E Property No: 151000500600120044,Property No: 122, Total Measuring 146.32 Sq. Meter, Kaggalakatte Village, Kanchipura Grama Panchayath, Hosadurga Taluk, Chitradurga, Karnataka, Pin: 577533. East-Land, West-Property of Ramachandrappa, South-Own Property, North-Pwd Road	16-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.1020828/-
18	Yamanappa, Savitri, Ravi Ghorpade, Kalakappa, **/NLAP0026050788/** Hubli	All That Part And Parcel of The Property Bearing Gram Panchayat No. 69/1/B, Measuring 62.43 Sq. Mtrs. Along With Residential Structure (62.43 Sq. Mtrs.) Bearing E-Property No. 151400402600620455, Sy. No. Gt of Veerapur Village, Gram Panchayat Ramapur, Taluk: Gajendragad, Dist: Gadag, Karnataka, Pin: 582114. East-Road, West-Road, South-House of Smt. Yallavva Sheede, North-House of Sri. Ravi Parasappa Gorapade	16-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.565600/-
19	Nagesha C N, Jyothi D C, Nagarathnam, **/MLAP0090052505/** Vivekananda Circle	All That Piece And Parcel of The Property Bearing No. 2644369226/A, S.A.S. No. 125/125/74/A, Situated At Ward No. 23, Chakahalli, H D Kote Town & Mysore (D). Measuring E-W: 7.62 Meters And N-S: 12.95 Meters Admeasuring: 98.67 Sq Mts, Karnataka, Pin: 571114. East-Road & House of Shankaranayaka, West- House of Bettanayaka, South-Property of N Ravikumar, North-House of Siddanayaka	16-12-2025	17-12-2025 & Rs.440932/-
20	Renuka Balanaik, Araboji Shivaji Balanayak, Sattevva Shivaji Balanayak, **/MHL00980013658/** Belgaum	All That Piece And Parcel of The Residential Property Bearing G.P No. 533/B, Rdpr P.I.D. No. 150400303000201015, Situated At Marihal Village, Marihal Grama Panchayat, Belagavi Block, Belagavi (D). Admeasuring: 75.251462 Sq. Meters. Tal: & Dist: Belagavi, Karnataka, Pin: 591103. East-Property of Tippanna Balanayak, West-Property of Basavanni Balanayak, South-Road, North-Property of Renuka A. Balanayak	17-12-2025	18-12-2025 & Rs.233925/-
21	Nagesh Burali, Kasturi Burali, Kalmesh Nagesh Burali, **/NLAP0098032269/** Belgaum	All That Piece And Parcel of The Residential Property Bearing Rdpr No 150400302900100174, G P No. 59A/1 Measuring 63.75 Sq. Mtrs. Situated At Chandanhosur Within The Limits of Gram Panchayat Tarihal Within The Local Jurisdiction of Sro Belagavi, Tal: Belagavi & Dist: Belagavi, Karnataka, Pin: 590003. East-Road, West-3 Feet Open Space Out of Present Schedule Property, South-House of Yallavva Nagappa Burli, North-4 Feet Open Space Out of Present Schedule Property	17-12-2025	18-12-2025 & Rs.441361/-
22	Mahammedgous Rafiq Donasal, Fiza Mahammedgous Donasal, Ramathbi Rafik Donasal, Rafiq Modinasab Donasal, **/NLAP0098032421/** Belgaum	All That Piece And Parcel of The Residential Property Bearing No. G.P. No. 205, Rdpr P.I.D. No. 152700301100101009, Situated At Teragaon Village, Teragaon Gram Panchayat, Haliyal Block, Uttara Kannada (D). Admeasuring: 42.00 Square Meters., Karnataka, Pin: 581356. East-Property of Imtiyaz Donasal, West-Property of Ismail Akbar Pungi, South-Panchayat Road, North-Property of Abdulkhadar Donasal	17-12-2025	18-12-2025 & Rs.415910/-
23	Mani, Sudha B, Shivamma, **/NHL01280037931/** Chamrajnagar	All That Piece & Parcel of The Property No. 523, Unique No. 152200522162000578 Kudlapura Village, And Gramapanchayathi, Nanjanagudu Taluk, Mysore District, Karnataka, Pin: 571118 Admeasuring 60.89 Sq Mts. East-Property of Ramesha, West-Road, South-House of Ramashetty, North-Vacant Site	17-12-2025	18-12-2025 & Rs.392384/-
24	Dhanaraja, Nagaraju, Kumari, **/NLAP0128049172/** Chamrajnagar	All That Piece & Parcel of The Property No. 140/129/A1/A Unique No. 28-119-19, Situated At Ward No. 19, 4th Division, 19th Ward, Gavaragerei Beedi, Gunddlupete Town & Chamarajanagara (D), Karanataka 571111 Admeasuring 21.5704 Sq. Mts. East-Road, West-Property of Krishna, South-Property of Chandrashekara, North-Vacant Site of Raju	17-12-2025	18-12-2025 & Rs.540144/-
25	Bettappa P, Ankamma B, Erappa P, **/C090COLONS000005004250/** Mysore	All That Piece And Parcel of Property Bearing Sagare Gramapanchayathi Khatha No. 14 And As Per Form No. 11 B Unique No. 152200102221600827 Situated At Sagare Village, H.D. Kkote Taluk, Mysore, Karnataka, Pin: 571121. Admeasuring East To West 9.144 Meters And North To South: 12.192 Meters. East-House of Channajamma Wife of Javaranaika, West-House of Sannakoosamma, South- House of Lakshmamma Wife of Yettanaika, North-Road	08-11-2025	19-12-2025 & Rs.596739/-
26	Sameel Khan, Shahida N, Asif R, **/NHL00510009515/** Shimoga	All That The Piece or Parcel of Site Along With Structure Standing There On Being Bearing Site/Property No. 10/1, E-Property No. 152400500700320080, Measuring Total 34.84 Sq. Meter, Including 34.84 Sq. Meter House, Situated At Lakshmipura Village, Hosahalli Village Panchayath, Shivamogga Taluk, Shivamogga District, Karnataka, Pin: 577202. East-Panchayath Road, West-Property of Tahera, South-Private Land, North-Remaining Property	18-12-2025	19-12-2025 & Rs.488696/-
27	Shabbir Khan Sikandar, Hina Kouser S, Sardar Khan K, **/NHL00510025163/** Shimoga	Item No. 1: All That The Piece or Parcel of Site Along With Structure Standing There on Being Bearing A Site/Khatha/Property No. 11, E-Property No. 152400104500620077, Measuring Total 222.97 Sq. Meter, Including 141.26 Sq. Meter Building, Situated At Dodderi Village, Dodderi Village Panchayath, Bhadravathi Taluk, Shivamogga District/ Item No. 2: All That The Piece or Parcel of Site Along With Structure Standing There on Being Bearing A Site/ Khatha/Property No. 5, Survey No. 1, E-Property No. 152400104500620060, Measuring Total 111.48 Sq. Meter, Including 111.52 Sq. Meter Building, Situated At Dodderi Village, Dodderi Village Panchayath, Bhadravathi Taluk, Shivamogga District, Karnataka, Pin: 577301. East-Item No. 1:Property of Shabbir Khan/ Item No. 2: House of Faruq Khan, West-Item No. 1: Land of Sardar Khan/ Item No. 2: Land Of Sardar Khan, South-Item No. 1: Land of Shahedaparveen/ Item No. 2: Land of Shahedaparveen, North-Item No. 1: Shivani Road / Item No. 2: Shivani Road	18-12-2025	19-12-2025 & Rs.949953/-
28	R Manjanaik, Sharada Bai, Ranga Naik, Supriya, **/MLAP0091051422/** Hassan	All That Piece And Parcel of The Site And House Property Bearing Property Id No. 151600202000200510, Gram Panchayath Property No. 514/443, And Property Situated At Rampura Village, Rampura Gram Panchayath, Arasikere Taluk, Hassan District On Property Totally Measuring 69.677280 Square Meters, Karnataka, Pin: 573126. East-Road, West-Agricultural of Hiduvali, South-V P Land, North-House Property of Smt. Anuradhabai	18-12-2025	19-12-2025 & Rs.342756/-

Notice, is therefore given to the Borrowers / Co-Borrowers, as mentioned herein above, calling upon them to make payment of the total outstanding amount as shown herein above, against the respective Borrower / Co-Borrower, within 60 days of publication of this notice. Failure to make payment of the total outstanding amount together with further interest by the respective Borrower/ Co-Borrower, MAHOFIN shall be constrained to take u/s 13(4) for enforcement of security interest upon properties as described above, steps are also being taken for service of notice in other manners as prescribed under the Act and the rules made hereunder. You are put to notice that the said mortgage can be redeemed upon payment of the entire amount due together with costs, charges and expenses incurred by MAHOFIN at any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction or private treaty for transfer by way of sale, as detailed in Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act. Take note that in terms of S-13 (13) of the SARFAESI Act, you are hereby restrained from transferring and/or dealing with the Secured Properties in any manner by way of sale, lease or in any other manner.

Date: 4th January 2026 | Place: KARNATAKA **Sd/- Authorised Officer Manappuram Home Finance Ltd**

QUICK READ

Kerala Ex-Minister Guilty In 1990 Drug Case

Thiruvananthapuram
A court on Saturday found former Kerala transport minister Antony Raju guilty of tampering with evidence in a 1990 drug case. Raju, now an MLA from Janadhipathya Kerala Congress, was involved in the seizure of 61.5 grams of hashish from an Australian citizen at Thiruvananthapuram airport. At the time, he was a junior lawyer. The court said Raju, along with a court official, had conspired to alter key evidence, affecting the trial outcome.

Delhi Police Bust Massive Visa Passport Fraud Network

New Delhi
Delhi Police arrested over 130 people, including travel agents, in 2025 for visa and passport fraud. The IGI Airport unit also traced the money trail, freezing more than 100 bank accounts linked to suspicious transactions. The arrests targeted organized networks that forged travel documents, cheated passengers, and facilitated illegal overseas travel. Officers focused on financial investigations, uncovering key links despite many payments being in cash. The crackdown marks a major step against document-related crime in India.

Rajnath Singh Unveils Vajpayee Malaviya Portraits Delhi Assembly

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta called the portrait unveiling a tribute, alongside book release and cultural programme celebrating India's heritage

NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday unveiled portraits of Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya at the Delhi Legislative Assembly, highlighting their inspiring contributions to India.

Addressing the gathering, Rajnath Singh emphasized that a nation's greatness comes not only from resources, technology, or economic power but from the ideals it cherishes and the personalities it admires. He said, "Ideals are not merely objects of remembrance, but guiding inspirational forces." He included Malaviya and Vajpayee in the tradition of guiding figures like Ram, Krishna, Buddha, and Mahavira.

Speaking about Vajpayee, the Defence Minister said he taught humility in power and dedication to national interests even while in opposition. "His life shows that democracy's strength lies in the way differences are resolved," he added. He paid tribute to both leaders, noting the ceremony also celebrated Vajpayee's birth centenary.

Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta described the installation of the portraits as a lasting tribute to their monumental contributions to India's democracy, education, culture, and public life. During the event, a coffee table book titled Bharat Mata was released, celebrating Indian nationalism through art, architecture, and literature and commemorating 150 years of the national song Vande Mataram.

The event was attended by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Padma Bhushan Ram Bahadur Rai, Parvesh Verma, and Deputy Speaker Mohan Singh Bisht. A patriotic cultural programme by artists from Sahitya Kala Parishad also highlighted India's rich artistic and national heritage. The ceremony combined remembrance, inspiration, and celebration of India's enduring values and iconic leaders, leaving attendees with a sense of pride and reflection on the nation's guiding ideals.

BJP Slams Ajit Pawar Over Civic Corruption Allegations

PUNE

Maharashtra BJP president Ravindra Chavan on Saturday criticised Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar for alleging corruption and debt in the Pimpri-Chinchwad municipal corporation, which was ruled by the BJP from 2017 to 2022. Chavan said Pawar should introspect before levelling charges, warning that BJP could respond, creating difficulties for him.

Pawar had claimed that the civic body had been plagued by corruption for nine years and burdened with debt. Chavan questioned which party Pawar's allegations targeted, highlighting that the statement appeared politically timed ahead of the civic polls scheduled for January 15, along with 28 other municipal corporations.

Chavan also explained the unopposed election of BJP candidates in Kalyan-Dombivli and other regions, attributing it to the alliance between BJP and Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde faction), leaving no opposition candidates in the fray.

Pawar had earlier defended giving election tickets to candidates with criminal backgrounds, citing his own experience with allegations in a Rs 70,000 crore irrigation scam. He stressed that no one is a criminal until proven guilty.

Maharashtra BJP hits out at Ajit Pawar over civic corruption claims, urging introspection before making allegations ahead of upcoming municipal elections.

The NCP, allied with BJP in the ruling Mahayuti coalition, has fielded candidates linked to the Suryakant Andekar gang, including Sonali Andekar, her sister-in-law Laxmi Andekar, and others accused in a murder case, who are currently in jail.

Chavan's remarks underscore the tensions within the ruling coalition ahead of elections, highlighting political rivalries, accountability debates, and the challenge of managing public perception in Maharashtra's civic governance. The BJP leader's message was clear: introspection before accusations is essential to maintain credibility and political stability.

Pawan Kalyan Lays Foundation TTD-Funded Temple Facilities

HYDERABAD

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Saturday laid the foundation stone for new facilities at the renowned Lord Hanuman temple in Kondagattu, Telangana. The project, funded by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), is estimated at Rs 35.19 crore.

The foundation stone marks the beginning of a 96-room choultry and additional buildings for devotees, especially those observing 'Hanuman Deeksha,' where concluding rituals can be performed. The TTD sanctioned the funds after Kalyan's intervention, following his 2024 visit when temple priests highlighted the need for these facilities.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will visit Thiruvananthapuram to celebrate BJP's landmark local body election win in the city

HM Shah To Celebrate BJP Historic Thiruvananthapuram Victory

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to visit Thiruvananthapuram on January 11 to celebrate the Bharatiya Janata Party's historic victory in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation elections. The BJP secured 50 seats out of 101 in the city, marking a major milestone in the party's growth in Kerala's urban politics. Shah's visit will take place ahead of a planned visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and he is expected to announce the PM's visit date.

During his trip, Shah will meet all victorious BJP representatives from the recent local body polls and address them at a special gathering, appreciating their role in the party's breakthrough success. The state leadership is preparing a large-scale conference, which will bring together elected members, senior leaders, and office-bearers from across Kerala. The event aims to celebrate the electoral win and discuss the party's future strategy in the state.

The BJP also gained support from an independent councillor, and the election in one ward, postponed earlier, is scheduled for January 12. Party leaders describe the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation victory as a turning point in the BJP's gradual political expansion in Kerala, particularly in urban local bodies.

Shah's visit, who also holds the Cooperation portfolio, is seen as a strong endorsement from the central leadership and a boost to the morale of the state unit. Preparations are underway to ensure a warm welcome, making the programme a high-profile political event. With both Shah's visit and the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Modi, the BJP aims to build momentum and project its growing influence in Kerala politics.

Abhishek Banerjee Slams EC BJP Over Voter Deletions

ALIPURDUAR

Senior TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday attacked the Election Commission and BJP, dubbing Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar as "Vanish Kumar" over alleged arbitrary voter deletions in West Bengal during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. He also compared BJP MPs to "snakes" that would eventually turn on those who trusted them.

Addressing a rally in Alipurduar, a BJP stronghold, Banerjee spoke at the second of his 26 rallies in the 19-day statewide campaign, Abar Jitbe Bangla. He claimed eligible voters were being removed from the list unfairly, saying TMC leaders had sought transparency from the Election Commission in Delhi but were ignored. "Living citizens are vanishing," he said, likening the SIR exercise to demonetisation, accusing the Modi government of misleading the public.

Banerjee warned voters against trusting the BJP. "BJP MPs and snakes are the same. They may be fed, but they will still bite," he said, urging citizens to support the TMC in upcoming elections. He described Alipurduar as key to TMC's comeback in north Bengal, emphasizing that "not a single booth can be left" if the party is to win.

He also accused the BJP of trying to curtail welfare schemes like Lakshmir Bhandar in West Bengal and alleged failures in BJP-ruled states, including deaths linked to "toxic" drinking water in Madhya Pradesh. Banerjee urged people to vote in large numbers using electronic voting machines to protect democratic rights. He said the 2026 elections would be decisive for safeguarding the Constitution and the state's welfare programmes.

Indore Water Contamination Claims Six Lives So Far

INDORE

Six people have died and over 200 others have been hospitalised after an outbreak of vomiting and diarrhoea linked to contaminated drinking water in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, officials said on Saturday. The outbreak has primarily affected the Bhagirathpura area, where local residents claim up to 16 people, including a six-month-old child, have died.

Indore Collector Shivam Verma confirmed that 203 patients are receiving treatment in 41 hospitals across the city, with 34 admitted to intensive care units (ICUs) for close monitoring. The situation has prompted urgent action from the state government.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav announced the transfer of Indore Municipal Commissioner Dilip Kumar Yadav and the suspension of additional municipal commissioner Rohit Sissoniya and in-charge superintendent engineer of the Public Health Engineering Department Sanjeev Shrivastava. The decisions were made in response to the health crisis caused by contaminated water.

The state government informed the High Court that the outbreak is now under control, with continuous monitoring to prevent any further spread. Authorities have assured residents that safety measures and treatment facilities are in place, and public health teams are working to maintain clean water supply in affected areas.

Mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava had earlier indicated that 10 deaths were reported, highlighting confusion over the exact toll, while residents continue to raise concerns about water safety. Health officials are closely observing the situation to contain the outbreak and prevent future incidents, as the city grapples with one of its worst recent public health emergencies.

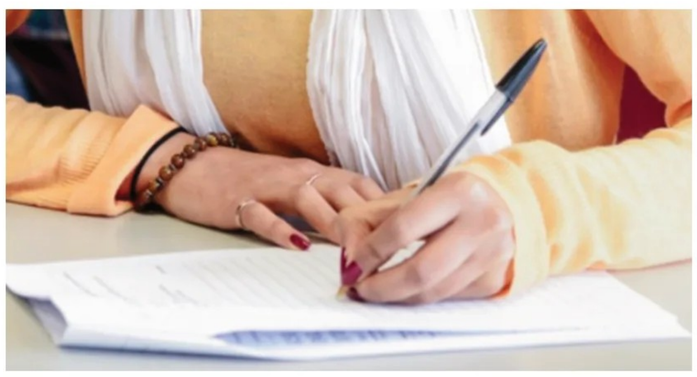
Kerala Government Freezes K-TET Implementation Order Immediately

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government on Saturday decided to freeze its earlier order on implementing K-TET for appointments and promotions in government and aided schools. The move comes after concerns over a recent Supreme Court judgment affecting teachers who joined service before April 1, 2010.

General Education Minister V Sivankutty said candidates who have cleared K-TET Category I or II will continue to be eligible for Lower Primary (LP) and Upper Primary (UP) teacher positions. He confirmed that the instructions issued in the January 1, 2026 order will remain suspended until further notice.

Sivankutty added that the government would soon file a review petition in the Supreme Court against the judgment, asserting it threatens the job security of long-serving teachers. "Not a single teacher appointed before 2010 will lose their job," he assured.



The minister emphasized that K-TET, introduced in 2012, should not be applied retrospectively to teachers appointed earlier, as this would violate natural justice and Article 14 of the Constitution. He warned that enforcing the judgment with retroactive effect could lead to significant job losses and serious social and economic consequences.

While a K-TET exam is scheduled for February 2026 for those who wish to acquire the qualification, the government is taking all legal steps to protect pre-2010 teachers. Officials have been directed to expedite the review petition after consultations with teachers' organisations and legal experts.

Sivankutty stressed that Kerala's high standards in education and literacy existed even before K-TET and removing experienced teachers would weaken the education system. Teachers need not worry, he said, as the state is committed to balancing legal compliance with job security.

ASSURED PENSION

Tamil Nadu CM Announces New Assured Pension

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Saturday announced the long-awaited "Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme" (TAPS) for government employees and teachers, fulfilling a demand over two decades old. The scheme promises 50 per cent of the last drawn salary as assured pension, with the state government providing additional funding alongside employees' 10 per cent contribution to the Pension Fund.

Under TAPS, pensioners will receive Dearness Allowance hikes every six months, similar to serving employees. In the event of a pensioner's death, 60 per cent of the pension will be granted to the nominee as family pension. Employees dying in service or at retirement will receive a death gratuity up to Rs 25 lakh, based on their service period. Those retiring without completing qualifying service will get a minimum pension, and employees under the previous Contributory Pension Scheme will receive a Special Compassionate Pension.

The state government will contribute an additional Rs 13,000 crore to the Pension Fund for TAPS, with annual expenditure estimated at Rs 11,000 crore. Stalin stressed that despite the current financial challenges, the government will fully bear the cost to safeguard employees' and teachers' interests.

Representatives of the Joint Action Council of Tamil Nadu Teachers Organisations and Government Employees Organisation (JACTO-GEO) welcomed the scheme, calling it the end of their 23-year struggle. Office-bearers thanked the CM, noting it meets key expectations. Stalin described the announcement as a New Year and Pongal gift, highlighting the DMK government's commitment to public welfare and the Dravidian model of governance.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Office of the Executive Engineer, No.1, Building Division,
SJP Campus, Bengaluru, Phone: 080-22255210
No. EE/Bld.1/AE-2/AE-1/2025-26/67 Date: 31.12.2025

INVITATION FOR SHORT-TERM TENDER (IFT)

The above Department invites Tenders through e-procurement portal of GoK **(http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** from eligible Tenderers for below mentioned works. Name of work: **(1)** Providing Mezzanine Floors, Antechamber, male and female toilets, flooring, painting, office tables, chairs and other allied Electrical works to room no. 16B at Ground Floor of Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru. (Reserved for S.C.) (Tender Reference: PWD/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT 30382) Approx. value of work: **Rs. 50.60 lakhs.** EMD: **Rs. 50,600/-. (2)** Providing & Laying Cobble Stone, Kerbs and other improvement works to pathway behind Governor's Residence, replacement of damaged paver tiles near Primary Health Centre, Garden Pathway, Glass House Pathway and other allied works at Raj Bhavan, Bengaluru. (Reserved for Others) (Tender Reference: PWD/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT30559) Approx. value of work: **Rs. 16.13 lakhs.** EMD: **Rs. 40,400/-.** Period of Completion: **2 Months for each work.** Cost of Document: **As in e-portal.** Last date for downloading Tender through e-procurement portal and submission through online: **08.01.2026 up to 4.00 PM.** Date of opening the Tender: **as per e-procurement guidelines.** Further information and other details can be obtained from the above office or from e-procurement portal **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer
DIPR/DD-C.P/4824/KSMCA/2025-26

QUICK READ

Rajasthan Makes Daily Newspaper Reading Mandatory

Jaipur

The Rajasthan government has made newspaper reading compulsory in all government schools to boost reading habits, vocabulary, and general awareness among students. As per a December 31 order, students must read newspapers for at least 10 minutes during morning assembly. Senior secondary and English-medium schools will subscribe to one Hindi and one English paper, while upper primary schools will have two Hindi papers. Students will learn new words daily and discuss key national and international news.

Uttarakhand Minister's Husband Sparks Controversy Again

Almora

Girdhari Lal Sahu, husband of Uttarakhand Minister Rekha Arya, sparked outrage after his remark on Bihar girls, saying they could be "bought for Rs 20,000–25,000" during a December event in Almora. His comments, on late marriage, triggered criticism as his wife handles women and child welfare. Following the backlash, Sahu released an apology video, saying, "If my words have hurt anyone, I apologise with folded hands." The incident drew widespread attention on social media and news platforms.

Mob Attacks Police After TMC Worker Arrested

Kolkata

Six policemen were injured when a mob attacked them after the arrest of TMC activist Musa Mollah in Sandeshkhali, North 24 Parganas. The Nazat police team went to Boyermari village Friday night, but villagers pelted stones and damaged the police vehicle. Reinforcements helped take Mollah to the station. He is accused of forcibly taking waterbodies for pisciculture. Two local TMC leaders, including a gram panchayat pradhan, were also detained for instigating the attack. Injured cops were treated and discharged.

Amit Shah: Andaman & Nicobar Islands to Become Major Revenue Contributor

Amit Shah outlined ambitious development plans for Andaman and Nicobar Islands, projecting economic growth, strategic importance, and national heritage revitalisation.

SRI VIJAYA PURAM

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said the Andaman and Nicobar Islands will become a major contributor to India's treasury within the next 10 years, reversing their earlier image as a financial burden. He also expressed confidence that India, currently the world's fourth-largest economy, will become the third-largest within two years.

Shah was speaking at the inauguration and foundation stone-laying ceremony of development projects worth ₹373 crore in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. He described the islands as a "pilgrimage site" of India's freedom struggle and highlighted their growing strategic, economic and historical importance.

Referring to projects such as international transshipment, oil exploration trials and infrastructure development, Shah credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for transforming the archipelago. He recalled that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had unfurled the national flag in Andaman on December 30, 1943, and noted that the Prime Minister honoured Bose by renaming Ross and Neil islands as 'Shaheed' and 'Swaraj'. He also mentioned the naming of 21 islands after Param Vir Chakra awardees.

Shah said memorials at the Cellular Jail now tell the world about the sacrifices of freedom fighters. He added that Port Blair has been renamed Sri Vijaya Puram as part of efforts to remove symbols of colonial rule.

Highlighting the islands' strategic location in the Indo-Pacific, Shah said they hold immense potential for tourism and the blue economy. He reiterated the Centre's commitment to development while preserving heritage.

During the visit, Shah inaugurated road projects, a consumer commission building, a hospital and ICU, an integrated command centre, and a DNA and cyber forensic laboratory.

Oshiwara Police Arrest 30-Year Fugitive In Attempted Murder

MUMBAI

The Oshiwara Police have apprehended H. Yadav, a 30-year-old fugitive who had been evading arrest since 1994 in an attempted murder case. The accused had fled Mumbai soon after the crime and remained in hiding for over three decades. A non-bailable warrant had been issued against him, but he successfully stayed off the authorities' radar until recently.

Senior police officers said that ahead of the municipal corporation elections, teams reviewed old pending cases and stepped up efforts to trace long-absconding accused. During this exercise, investigators managed to obtain Yadav's phone number, which revealed his location in Uttar Pradesh. Acting on the lead, a team from Oshiwara Police travelled to Uttar Pradesh on New Year's Eve and arrested him. Yadav was subsequently brought back to Mumbai and produced before a local court.

Police officials highlighted that the arrest demonstrates the department's commitment to pursuing fugitives, regardless of how long they have evaded the law. The operation also underscores the value of coordinated investigation efforts and modern tracking techniques in solving old cases.

The case, dating back to 1994, had remained unresolved for decades, causing distress to the victim and the community. Authorities said the arrest would provide closure to the family affected by the attempted murder and serve as a warning to others that fleeing justice will not protect criminals indefinitely.

ECI Seeks Public Feedback On ECINet App Launch

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has invited citizens to download the ECINet App and provide suggestions ahead of its official launch later this month. Deputy Director P. Pawan urged users to submit feedback through the app's "Submit a Suggestion" tab, with submissions open until January 10.

Developed under Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and election commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, the ECINet App was piloted successfully during the Bihar Assembly Elections 2025 and subsequent bye-elections. Officials said the app offers faster voter services, quick publication of polling percentage trends, and release of Index Cards within 72 hours of poll closure, a process that earlier took weeks.

The ECI noted that user feedback will be carefully examined to make the app more user-friendly before the formal launch. ECINet integrates 40 separate election-related applications and websites—including the Voter Helpline App (VHA), CVIGIL, Saksham, Polling Trends, and Know Your Candidate (KYC)—into a single interface, making voter services more accessible nationwide.

The platform is being refined continuously based on input from election officials, observers, and field staff to ensure seamless functionality during elections. Citizens can download the app from both the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.

Rajnath Singh Warns Against Growing White-Collar Terrorism

UDAIPUR

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday cautioned against a rise in white-collar terrorism in India, highlighting that highly educated professionals are being drawn into anti-social and anti-national activities. Speaking at Bhupal Nobles' University's 104th foundation day, he cited the November 10 Red Fort car bomb attack in Delhi, which killed fifteen people. Shockingly, several arrested suspects were doctors trained to save lives but found handling explosives, including Dr Umar-un-Nabi, Dr Muzammil Ganai, Dr Adeel Rather, and Dr Shaheena Saeed.

Singh stressed that such incidents expose the failure of the modern education system, arguing that academic and professional achievement alone cannot build responsible citizens. He said education must instil humility, character, and a sense of duty—"dharma"—explaining it as responsibility toward fellow citizens and the nation, not religious rituals.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh warns that highly educated professionals are increasingly drawn into white-collar terrorism and urges ethical education to build character and responsibility

He also highlighted India's achievements in defence and economic self-reliance, praising defence startups and expressing confidence that India will achieve full self-reliance in weapon systems within 15–20 years. Singh noted that India, currently the world's fourth-largest economy, is on course to become the third-largest by 2030.

The minister urged universities and research institutions to adopt a multidisciplinary approach, focusing on practical solutions to societal problems rather than just producing journal publications. He said ethical education must complement technical knowledge to ensure that future professionals contribute positively to society and national security, preventing educated individuals from turning to anti-national activities.

This warning serves as a reminder that India's growth and security depend not only on knowledge but also on ethics, responsibility, and strong character.

The district administration has banned drones for two days ahead of Home Minister Amit Shah's visit for security

Tiruchirappalli Bans Drones During Amit Shah Visit

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

In view of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Tiruchirappalli on January 4 and 5, the district administration has imposed a complete ban on flying drones and other unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The restriction applies throughout the Tiruchirappalli district. District Collector V. Saravanan, IAS, stated that the ban has been enforced to ensure the safety of both the visiting minister and the general public. He warned that strict legal action will be taken against anyone violating the order.

The administration urged citizens and organisations to fully cooperate and follow all security guidelines during the two-day restriction. This step is part of broader security measures surrounding Shah's visit.

Earlier, on Saturday, Amit Shah chaired a Parliamentary Consultative Committee meeting of the Ministry of Home Affairs in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands at Hotel Sea-Princess, Wandoor. Members of Parliament from both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha discussed key ministry policies, internal security, governance, cybercrime, border management, and criminal justice reforms with the Home Minister. Ministers of State Nityanand Rai and Bandi Sanjay Kumar also attended.

Following the meeting, Shah inaugurated an exhibition on the Naveen Nyaya Sanhita at ITF Field in Sri Vijaya Puram and laid the foundation stones for several development projects at Netaji Stadium. He had arrived in the islands on Friday evening and was welcomed at Veer Savarkar International Airport by Lieutenant Governor Admiral DK Joshi, the Chief Secretary, senior officials, and local PRI members.

The drone ban underscores the administration's focus on high-level security during the Home Minister's official visit and ensures smooth conduct of public and official events in Tiruchirappalli.

PM Modi To Inaugurate 72nd National Volleyball Tournament

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually inaugurate the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament on January 4 at 12 PM. The event's main ceremony will be held at Dr Sampoornanand Sports Stadium in Varanasi. The tournament, running from January 4 to 11, will see over 1,000 players compete across 58 teams representing different states and institutions. Officials said the event will highlight high-level competition, sportsmanship, and emerging talent in Indian volleyball.

Hosting the tournament in Varanasi reflects the city's growing focus on sports infrastructure and its ambition to become a hub for major national events. It also aligns with the government's broader goal of promoting athletic development and encouraging youth participation in sports.

In a related event on Saturday, PM Modi inaugurated the Grand International Exposition of Sacred Piprahwa Relics, titled "The Light & the Lotus: Relics of the Awakened One", at the Rai Pithora Cultural Complex. The Prime Minister said that India's priceless heritage has returned after 125 years. The exhibition features sacred relics of Lord Buddha, including gem relics and reliquaries unearthed during excavations in 1898 and 1971–1975 at Piprahwa.

Modi expressed that Indian citizens can now seek blessings from these relics, calling it a moment of national pride. He highlighted India's efforts to protect its heritage from exploitation and restore cultural treasures to the country.

The volleyball tournament and the exhibition together underscore India's dual focus on promoting sports and preserving heritage, reflecting the government's efforts to strengthen both physical culture and historical consciousness nationwide.

Mahayuti Alliance Secures 68 Unopposed Wins In Maharashtra

MUMBAI

Ahead of Maharashtra's civic body elections, 68 candidates from the ruling Mahayuti alliance were elected unopposed, highlighting the coalition's strong grassroots presence. Of these, 44 candidates belong to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Friday was the final day for withdrawal of nominations, during which several rival candidates pulled out, allowing Mahayuti nominees to win without a contest.

The Kalyan Dombivli Municipal Corporation recorded the highest number of unopposed winners, with 21 Mahayuti candidates elected—15 from the BJP and six from the Shiv Sena. In north Maharashtra, Jalgaon saw 12 uncontested corporators, evenly split between the BJP and Shiv Sena. Similarly, in Panvel, seven BJP candidates were declared elected unopposed.

Bhiwandi witnessed six BJP wins, despite the area traditionally being an NCP (Sharadchandra Pawar faction) stronghold. In Thane, Shiv Sena secured six uncontested victories, even amid tensions with the BJP in deputy chief minister Eknath Shinde's home district. Meanwhile, the Raj Thackeray-led MNS protested in Thane, questioning the process used by the ruling alliance.

ED Files Charge Sheet In West Bengal Sand Smuggling

KOLKATA

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a charge sheet in a major sand smuggling case in West Bengal, officials said on Saturday. The charge sheet was submitted within 60 days of the arrest of Arun Sharaf, owner of GD Mining, and other accused, to the ED's special court at Bankshall premises. A total of 14 companies are named in the filing.

The ED claimed that the accused allegedly laundered Rs 145 crore through illegal sand mining and sales. Arun Sharaf, arrested on November 6 last year, is accused of committing multiple types of fraud by flouting rules under the West Bengal Sand (Mining, Transport, Storage and Sale) regulations (WBMDTCL) to make huge profits.

Investigators said the accused misused truck license plates authorized for sand transport by using the same number for multiple trucks, often evading detection by state authorities. The sand transport permits, which included QR codes, were allegedly forged. Invalid or fake challans were also used to move sand illegally from river or stock points allotted through official auctions.

AI OUTREACH

DMK Launches AI Platforms For 2026 Polls

CHENNAI

The DMK on Saturday unveiled AI-powered platforms to gather public suggestions for its 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly election manifesto. Chief Minister and party President M.K. Stalin launched the initiative at Anna Arivalayam, including a dedicated website, AI portal, phone numbers, email, and social media channels.

The party aims to ensure wide public participation in shaping its vision. Citizens can share ideas via WhatsApp, email, website, social media, and the AI portal tnmanifesto.ai. A 12-member manifesto committee led by Deputy General Secretary Kanimozhi Karunanidhi will consult with farmers, youth, women, business owners, and other groups, traveling across districts to collect feedback.

The DMK highlighted its 2021 governance record, noting that of 505 manifesto promises, 404—nearly 80%—have been fulfilled or are under implementation. Some commitments, like scrapping NEET and declaring the Thirukkural a national scripture, were stalled due to non-cooperation from the BJP-led Union government, while others faced local protests or administrative challenges.

The party also introduced welfare schemes not in the original manifesto, such as the Chief Minister's Breakfast Scheme, Illam Thedi Kalvi, Pudumai Pen, Naam Muthalvan, Makkalai Thedi Maruthuvam, Kalaignar's Kanavu Illam, and "Ungaludan Stalin."

Calling the next phase "Dravidian Model 2.0," the DMK appealed to citizens to actively contribute ideas for Tamil Nadu's future development, marking a technology-driven approach to inclusive policymaking and participatory governance ahead of the 2026 elections.

QUICK READ

Dozens missing after migrant boat capsizes off Gambia

Banjul

Dozens of people remain missing after a boat carrying over 200 migrants capsized off the Gambian coast, the Defence Ministry said on Friday. The accident occurred on Wednesday. Officials said 96 people were rescued and seven bodies were recovered. The boat was later found stuck on a sandbank. Ten survivors are in critical condition. The migrants are believed to be from several African countries trying to reach Europe via the Canary Islands.

Kech kidnapping surge sparks security alarm

Balochistan

Rising cases of kidnapping for ransom in Kech district have raised serious concerns about law and order. Political leaders said government inaction is increasing fear and hurting business activity. National Party president Abdul Malik Baloch spoke at a press conference in Turbat, organised by All Parties Kech. He said public confidence is falling. Leaders cited the recent abduction of two well-known businessmen, Haseeb Yasin and Shah Nawaz Gul Jan.

13 NCP student leaders resign over Jamaat Alliance

Dhaka

Thirteen top leaders of Bangladesh's student-led National Citizen Party (NCP) have resigned within eight days, opposing the party's alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami ahead of February elections. The leaders cited lack of transparency, political compromises, and disagreements over decision-making as reasons for quitting, reports said. The NCP was formed in February from a large offshoot of Students Against Discrimination (SAD), which led the 2024 July Uprising, with support from interim government chief Muhammad Yunus.

Pak supports China's Mediation claims during Op Sindoor

China mediated India-Pakistan tensions in 2025, while Pakistan supported Beijing's role despite India preferring direct bilateral resolution

Continued from page 1

Pakistan has endorsed China's claim of helping defuse tensions with India during Operation Sindoor, describing Beijing's role as diplomacy for peace and part of broader international efforts.

Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said Chinese leadership maintained constant contact with Pakistan's leaders and reached out to Indian officials between May 6 and 10, 2025. He added that these positive diplomatic exchanges helped reduce regional tensions and restore peace and security. Andrabi affirmed that China's characterisation of mediation was accurate, calling it a constructive effort in a critical period.

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi had earlier stated at a Beijing symposium that tensions between India and Pakistan were among the hot issues mediated by China in 2025. Pakistan's endorsement comes despite India's consistent position that the May conflict was resolved through direct talks between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of both countries, and that no third-party intervention is necessary in bilateral matters.

Operation Sindoor, launched by India on May 7, targeted terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in response to the Pahalgam attack that killed 26 civilians. The strikes led to four days of intense clashes, ending on May 10 with an understanding to halt military actions.

During the conflict, Pakistan employed Chinese defence technology, underscoring its reliance on Beijing's hardware. Andrabi stressed that China's involvement reflected diplomacy aimed at regional security and stability, describing the initiative as consistent with international efforts to resolve the crisis peacefully.

The episode highlights China's growing role as a strategic partner for Pakistan and its attempt to position itself as a mediator in South Asian security disputes.

EU Chief Kallas accused of pushing war agenda

MOSCOW

A senior Russian official sharply criticized the European Union's foreign policy leadership, accusing EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas of pushing the bloc toward conflict with Russia and China. Kirill Dmitriev, head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund and special presidential envoy for economic cooperation, made the remarks on X, reacting to a video of Kallas questioning the EU's ability to handle risks related to China without effectively pressuring Russia. Dmitriev wrote, Idiotic Kaja wants the EU at war with Russia AND China, highlighting Moscow's view that EU leaders are pursuing destabilizing policies.

Kallas, who became EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy in late 2024, is known for her firm stance on Russia. As Estonia's former prime minister, she has strongly advocated supporting Ukraine since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. In her current role, she has pushed for tougher sanctions on Moscow, increased military support to Kyiv, and stronger European defense cooperation.

The EU, however, rejected claims that it seeks war with Russia or China. Officials said Kallas's statements reflect deterrence strategy, emphasizing that Europe must bear economic and political costs to defend international law and security. On China, Brussels considers Beijing a systemic rival but stresses dialogue and economic engagement rather than military confrontation.

Analysts say Dmitriev's remarks fit a Kremlin narrative portraying the West as warmongers, aiming to shift blame for the Ukraine war and reduce support for Kyiv. Despite the sharp exchange, EU officials maintain that diplomacy remains central even as relations with Russia continue to worsen.

Russia accuses EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas of promoting confrontation with both Russia and China, escalating tensions amid ongoing Ukraine conflict

Taiwan condemns CCP over alleged information warfare

TAIPEI

Taiwan's National Security Council Secretary-General Joseph Wu on Saturday sharply criticised the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), calling it disgusting and sick for alleged information warfare and transnational repression targeting Taiwan.

Wu highlighted Beijing's use of social media despite domestic bans, writing on X that the CCP runs official accounts specifically to conduct information operations against Taiwan. He described the regime's actions as disgusting & sick, drawing attention to the double standards in its online behaviour.

The remarks followed CCP state media publishing personal information of Taiwanese legislator Puma Shen on an official Facebook page. Wu condemned the act as transnational repression that goes beyond what any society should tolerate, urging Meta to remove the post and the international community to condemn China.

Shen, a Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) lawmaker, has faced multiple actions from Chinese authorities. In late October, China's Chongqing Public Security Bureau labeled him wanted for alleged secessionist crimes. Arrest warrants were later issued, along with cash bounties for online influencers accused of supporting Taiwan independence. China also suggested Shen could be pursued through Interpol, a claim Taiwan strongly rejected.

'Pakistan families spend most income on basic necessities'

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's worsening economic crisis is forcing households to dedicate nearly two-thirds of income to essentials like food, housing, and electricity.

A recent government survey, the Household Integrated Economic Survey 2024-25, highlights the severe cost-of-living pressures Pakistani families now face. According to the report, rising inflation, higher utility tariffs, and persistent economic mismanagement have pushed expenditure on necessities far beyond sustainable levels. Families spend about 63 per cent of total income on food and housing-related costs, with food alone accounting for 37 per cent and housing and utilities 26 per cent.

This focus on survival comes at the expense of education, health, and recreation.

Households allocate just 2.5 per cent of their budgets to education, while combined spending on education, health, and leisure remains only 7 per cent. Experts warn that this decline threatens long-term human development and limits opportunities for future generations.

The survey also shows growing dependence on foreign remittances and informal support. Remittances now contribute nearly 8 per cent of household income, up from less than 5 per cent six years ago, while gifts and external assistance have more than doubled. Rural households are particularly affected due to limited local employment options, relying heavily on external aid.

Despite average monthly incomes rising from PKR 41,500 to over PKR 82,000 in six years, expenditure growth outpaces income, surging around 19 per cent annually and eroding purchasing power. Income inequality remains stark, with the top 20 per cent earning more than three times the lowest quintile.

The survey underscores the urgent need for economic reforms and social protection measures to reduce financial stress, support human development, and improve living standards for millions of Pakistanis struggling under the cost-of-living crisis.

Lahore Nasir Bagh proj halted over environmental concerns

LAHORE

The controversial underground parking project at Nasir Bagh in Lahore has been suspended amid environmental concerns and public outcry. The project faced strong opposition from civil society and environmental groups, who warned that converting a public park into a parking facility would worsen Lahore's already severe air pollution and ecological crisis. Imrana Tiwana, president of the Lahore Conservation Society, criticised the plan. The Lahore High Court ordered the project halted, directing authorities to fully comply with environmental laws before any construction. Detailed environmental impact assessments, legal clearances, and tree protection plans are now mandatory. Earlier NESPAK feasibility studies identified 123 trees, including neem, peepal, sheesham, and date palms, slated for relocation within Nasir Bagh.

Pakistan FM departs Beijing for strategic dialogue

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar left for Beijing on Saturday to co-chair the seventh round of the Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue on January 4.

According to the Foreign Office (FO), Dar is visiting at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and will be the first foreign dignitary to visit China in 2026. The talks will be jointly chaired by Dar and Wang Yi and aim to review bilateral relations, explore new areas of cooperation, and strengthen the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries.

The FO highlighted that the Strategic Dialogue is the highest-level consultative platform between Islamabad and Beijing. It allows comprehensive assessment of bilateral ties, as well as discussions on regional and global issues of shared interest. During this round, both sides are expected to announce initiatives and programmes to mark the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations, reflecting decades of close political, economic, and strategic cooperation.

Dar's visit follows regular high-level exchanges between Pakistan and China, reaffirming their shared commitment to enhancing bilateral ties and promoting regional peace, stability, and sustainable development. The previous, sixth round of the dialogue was held in Islamabad in August last year, during which Wang Yi met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, President Asif Ali Zardari, and Foreign Minister Dar. China reiterated strong support for Pakistan and its commitment to advance regional peace and long-term stability.

The upcoming dialogue is expected to reinforce mutual trust, expand cooperation in multiple sectors, and further cement the Pakistan-China partnership as a cornerstone of regional diplomacy, signalling both countries' dedication to continuing decades of strategic, political, and economic collaboration.

SUDOKU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

	6			7			9	
8		2	1		6	5		7
	1			9			2	
2		1	6		8	7		9
	8			4			1	
5		9	2		3	8		4
	2			8			5	
1		8	5		9	4		2
	5			2			8	

6	5	9	3	1	4	2	8	7
1	8	7	6	5	2	4	3	9
2	3	4	8	9	7	5	1	6
4	2	6	1	3	5	9	7	8
8	7	1	9	4	6	3	5	2
5	9	3	2	7	8	6	4	1
3	1	2	5	8	9	7	6	4
7	6	5	4	2	1	8	9	3
9	4	8	7	6	3	1	2	5

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

Takaichi's Taiwan stance raises Japan-China tensions

TOKYO

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's recent statements on Taiwan's security role have heightened tensions with China and sparked concerns over her leadership approach.

Takaichi, who became Japan's first female prime minister on October 21, suggested that Japan could act in a Taiwan emergency, raising alarms in Beijing. Analysts and opposition lawmakers warn that her hardline stance lacks sufficient moderating voices, as senior moderates in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and coalition partners distance themselves from her positions.

Takaichi is widely seen as the political heir to late Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, whose security-focused policies she admires. However, critics argue she lacks the consensus-building skills Abe used to maintain stable relations with China and coordinate broader economic and social policies. Less than a week after her LDP leadership win, the coalition partner Komeito ended its 26-year alliance, citing dissatisfaction with political scandals and governance style, further limiting checks on her decisions.

Observers note that Takaichi now has few advisers experienced in China affairs. Former LDP figures like Hiroshi Moriyama, who helped resume imports of Japanese food products from China in 2025, are no longer in her inner circle. Some imports have since been suspended following Takaichi's Taiwan remarks.

Economically, she favors expansionary spending while sidelining calls to protect fiscal credibility. Her bloc holds a slim majority in the lower house and lacks a majority in the upper house, prompting outreach to other parties for support.

KAUNDINYA VOYAGE

INSV Kaundinya approaches Muscat after historic voyage

MUSCAT

The Indian Naval sailing vessel INSV Kaundinya is nearing its final port of call in Muscat, Oman, after a historic maiden overseas voyage from Porbandar, Gujarat. Currently about 880 nautical miles from Muscat, the crew continues to navigate changing winds and rough seas, sharing updates on their progress.

Sanjeev Sanyal, member of PM Modi's Economic Advisory Council sailing aboard the vessel, described the challenges of sleeping amid rolling seas and strong winds, while highlighting the smooth progress of the journey. The expedition emphasizes India's long-standing connection to the oceans and its centuries-old maritime traditions.

The voyage was formally flagged off by Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, in the presence of Oman's Ambassador Issa Saleh Al Shibani and senior Indian Navy officers. The indigenously built stitched sailing vessel showcases ancient Indian shipbuilding techniques using natural materials, reflecting the nation's rich maritime heritage.

During a call with the crew, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh Tripathi praised the team for their professionalism, calling the voyage a testament to India's commitment to maritime education, cultural preservation, and training the next generation of sailors. PM Modi congratulated the designers, shipbuilders, and the Indian Navy for bringing the unique vessel to life and wished the crew a safe journey.

The expedition retraces historical maritime routes connecting India's western coast with Oman, strengthening cultural, commercial, and civilisational ties. Its arrival in Muscat is expected to further enhance bilateral relations, reinforce shared maritime heritage, and symbolize centuries of friendship and cooperation between the two nations.

QUICK READ

Pakistan stares at mega economic crisis in 2026

New Delhi

Pakistan stares at several economic challenges in 2026 amid continuing low economic growth, recurring militant attacks and potential disasters related to climate change, according to a new report. A report in Nikkei Asia by Farhan Bokhari said that the country has avoided default on its foreign debt payments owing to a timely intervention by the International Monetary Fund in 2024 with a $7 billion loan through 2027, but faces major challenges this year. The country's prevailing annual economic growth rate of just 3 per cent "does not compare well to being barely above the annual population growth rate". It is also clear that reviving economic growth presents Pakistan with many tough challenges, the report said.

Indians lose over Rs 52,976 crore to cyber frauds over six years

Mumbai

Indians lost over Rs 52,976 crore to various frauds and cheating cases over the past six years, with Maharashtra recording the highest monetary losses in such offences, according to reports. Losses of about Rs 19,813 crore and 2,177,524 cheating related complaints were recorded in 2025, according to data from Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) that compiled information from National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal. Reported losses in 2024 was Rs 22,849.49 crore with 1,918,852 complaints, and smaller sums were recorded in earlier years pointing to a worrying surge in financial crimes such as investment traps, digital arrest, online scams and banking frauds.

Delhi-NCR clocks highest yearly average residential price rise

New Delhi

Delhi-NCR recorded the highest yearly average residential price rise at 23 per cent in 2025 -- from Rs 7,550 square feet in 2024 to about Rs 9,300 per sq ft in 2025, according to a new report. On an annual basis, the collective average housing price rose by 8 per cent in the top seven cities - from Rs 8,590 per sq ft by Q4 2024-end to around Rs 9,260 per sq ft at Q4 2025-end, according to Anarock Research data. The other major cities recorded single-digit price appreciation, ranging between 4-9 per cent in 2025 as against last year's 13-27 per cent in 2024, the report mentioned. Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Pune, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Delhi-NCR.

Amazon Allows Limited Remote Work for US Employees

Amazon has allowed select US employees stuck in India to work remotely, but under strict operational restrictions.

NEW YORK

US tech giant Amazon has permitted a group of US-based employees stranded in India due to prolonged visa delays to continue working remotely until March 2, 2026, though under tightly defined conditions. The temporary relaxation applies only to employees awaiting rescheduled US visa appointments and marks an exception to Amazon's otherwise strict five-day, in-office work policy.

According to an internal memo cited by Business Insider, the policy covers staff who were physically present in India as of December 13. While these employees may continue remote work, Amazon has placed sweeping restrictions on the nature of tasks they are allowed to perform. They are prohibited from coding, testing, or troubleshooting software, visiting Amazon offices, negotiating or signing contracts, and managing teams, customers, or business partners.

The memo explicitly states that "all reviews, final decision making, and sign offs should be undertaken outside India," underlining that the restrictions are mandated by compliance with local laws. It further stresses that there are "no exceptions to these restrictions," signalling a rigid enforcement approach despite the unusual circumstances faced by affected employees.

The visa-related disruptions impacting Amazon workers are part of a broader global issue. US missions in several countries have reported delays as enhanced social media screening requirements are implemented. These checks apply not only to H-1B workers but also to their dependents and individuals applying for F, J, and M category visas, which include students and exchange visitors. In some cases, processing delays are reportedly stretching close to a year.

Other technology companies have also taken note of the problem. Google warned employees in December against travelling internationally after learning that re-entry visa processing at US embassies and consulates could face "significant" delays of up to 12 months.

The issue disproportionately affects Indian professionals. India-born workers accounted for more than 70 per cent of approved H-1B visas in 2024, driven by a long-standing backlog and the high demand for skilled talent from India in the US technology sector.

NSE holds investor awareness programme

NEW DELHI

Investor awareness is the strongest foundation for Gujarat's growing investor base, said Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD & CEO of the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE). Speaking at an Investor Awareness Programme (IAP) in Gujarat's Rajkot, the MD & CEO of the stock exchange said that the initiative can empower citizens and caution them against fraud.

"At NSE, we believe that informed investors make better decisions, which contribute to long-term economic wealth creation. Through initiatives like this Investor Awareness Programme, we aim to empower citizens with the right knowledge, caution them against frauds, and help them participate safely in India's growth story," Chauhan said.

The event aimed to enhance financial literacy, promote responsible investing, and strengthen investor awareness, according to a statement from the NSE.

Gujarat has about 1.1 crore registered investors, making it the third largest state by investor base with an 8.7 per cent share of India's total investors and a 10 year compound annual growth rate of over 17 per cent in the number of investors. About 11 lakh new investors were added in 2025, and Rajkot accounted for more than 55 per cent of new registrations in the state.

About 28 per cent of investors from Gujarat are women, higher than the national average of 25 per cent. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from new and existing investors, professionals, and students. NSE has conducted over 16,000 Investor Awareness Programmes in FY25-26, so far reaching 8.3 lakh participants across the country.

These initiatives span students, women entrepreneurs, rural investors, armed forces personnel, and first-time investors, the statement said.

A fresh debate has emerged over gig work conditions after a union disputed Zomato CEO's earnings claims.

Debate Erupts Over Working Conditions in Quick Commerce

MUMBAI

A renewed debate over labour conditions in India's rapidly expanding quick commerce sector erupted on Saturday after a Telangana-based gig workers' union sharply criticised Zomato CEO Deepinder Goyal for defending the company's delivery partner model. The union described existing conditions as "not decent work," pushing back strongly against Goyal's public claims on rider earnings and welfare.

The controversy followed a detailed post by Goyal on social media platform X, where he outlined how delivery partners earn on Zomato and its quick commerce arm Blinkit. According to the CEO, delivery partners earned an average of ₹102 per hour in 2025, excluding tips — up from ₹92 per hour in 2024 — representing a 10.9 per cent year-on-year increase.

"In 2025, average earnings per hour (EPH), excluding tips, for a delivery partner on Zomato were ₹102. In 2024, this number was ₹92," Goyal wrote. He added that earnings per hour have shown steady growth over a longer period, presenting the data as evidence of improving financial outcomes for delivery partners.

Goyal further emphasised the flexibility offered to gig workers, stating that delivery partners are free to choose their working hours, retain 100 per cent of customer tips, and are not compelled into unsafe driving practices due to rapid delivery commitments such as 10-minute guarantees. He also highlighted welfare initiatives, including insurance coverage and pension support, as part of Zomato's efforts to support its delivery workforce.

However, the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Association (TGPWA) rejected the company's assessment, arguing that the figures presented do not reflect the lived reality of most riders. In a counter-post on X, the union said that once essential expenses such as fuel, vehicle maintenance, and other operational costs are deducted, actual earnings fall significantly.

According to the union, real take-home earnings for many delivery partners drop to around ₹81 per hour after expenses, raising concerns about sustainability and income security.

South Korean budget minister pick faces growing pressure

SEOUL

Lee Hye-hoon, the nominee to head the newly established Ministry of Planning and Budget, came under intensifying political pressure on Saturday to step down as suspicions of her husband's past real estate speculation emerged following revelations of her mistreating an intern while serving as a lawmaker. Lee, a former three-term lawmaker from the conservative bloc, has drawn criticism from both the ruling and opposition parties since her surprise nomination by President Lee Jae Myung on Sunday.

Some members of the ruling Democratic Party have voiced discomfort over the economist-turned-politician's past remarks supporting former President Yoon Suk Yeol's failed martial law bid, while the main opposition People Power Party (PPP) has branded her a traitor.

The PPP has stepped up its offensive ahead of Lee's confirmation hearing, citing recently disclosed audio recordings of Lee abusively reprimanding an intern during her time in the National Assembly.

On Saturday, PPP Rep. Joo Jin-woo also claimed that Lee's husband engaged in real estate speculation by purchasing large tracts of land near Incheon International Airport, west of Seoul, about a year before it officially opened in 2001. Joo released copies of land registry documents showing that the husband bought a 6,612-square-meter plot on Yeongjong Island in Incheon in 2000, when the couple was living in Seoul.

The lawmaker argued that the land was later expropriated by state-run land development corporations in 2006 for about 3.91 billion won ($2.7 million), claiming the couple made more than three times their initial investment in just six years.

Rep. Park Sung-hoon, the PPP's chief spokesperson, urged Lee to apologize and step away from politics. "What is important is that this is not just a one-off mistake but an expression of a warped sense of privilege that tramples on the weak through the abuse of power," commented Park on the nominee's past admonishing of her intern.

Uttarakhand to Launch Malta Mission to Boost Citrus Farming

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami announced a Malta Mission to transform Uttarakhand into India's horticulture capital.

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Saturday unveiled plans to launch a dedicated "Malta Mission" aimed at significantly boosting the production of the citrus fruit and positioning the hill state as the horticulture capital of India. The announcement was made while addressing the Uttarakhand Malta Festival 2026 held in Dehradun.

Speaking at the event, Dhami underlined the state government's commitment to farmers under the leadership of Narendra Modi. He announced that farmers in Uttarakhand would receive an 80 per cent subsidy for micro-irrigation facilities, a move aimed at improving water efficiency and increasing orchard productivity. "Just as we launched the Apple and Kiwi policies, a Malta Mission will also be initiated. Establishing orchards of citrus fruits is our government's priority," the Chief Minister said.

Dhami explained that the Malta Festival, organised in Dehradun on Saturday, would be expanded to other districts in the coming days to create awareness among farmers and stakeholders. He also revealed plans to organise a major promotional event in Delhi to give the Malta fruit wider recognition at the national and international levels. "We want Malta from Uttarakhand to gain a distinct identity across markets," he told reporters.

Drawing parallels with earlier initiatives, Dhami pointed to the success of the Kiwi Mission, which resulted in a substantial increase in kiwi production in the state. "Similarly, we will launch a Malta Mission to substantially increase Malta production," he said, expressing confidence that the focused programme would benefit farmers in the hill regions by providing them with a stable and profitable horticulture alternative.

The Chief Minister's announcement comes close on the heels of significant assurances from the Centre. Last week, Union Minister for Agriculture, Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that, with central support, several major initiatives have been launched for Uttarakhand.

NTPC sanctions Rs 23.16 crore to upgrade radiotherapy services

MUMBAI

NTPC Limited has signed a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with Gujarat Cancer and Research Institute (GCRI) for the upgradation of radiotherapy services, it was announced on Saturday. According to a Ministry of Power statement, NTPC's Western Region–I Headquarters, Mumbai, signed the MoA. Under this CSR initiative, NTPC has sanctioned Rs 23.16 crore for the upgradation of radiotherapy services at the Siddhpur Satellite Centre of GCRI, Ahmedabad.

"The support will be utilised for the procurement and installation of a high-energy Linear Accelerator (LINAC), significantly enhancing advanced cancer treatment capabilities and improving access to quality radiotherapy services for patients in the region," according to the official statement.

This reaffirms NTPC's commitment to inclusive development and its continued focus on strengthening critical healthcare infrastructure through meaningful CSR interventions.

The MoA was exchanged between Dr. Shashank Pandya, Director, GCRI, and E. Satya Phani Kumar, Regional Executive Director (West–I), NTPC, in the presence of senior officials from both organisations.

Late last month, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and NTPC completed the drilling of India's first well for testing the viability of geological carbon dioxide (CO_2) storage in sedimentary formations such as coal and sandstone.

The collaboration, launched under the aegis of NITI Aayog in November 2022, brought together NETRA - the R&D wing of NTPC, and the Department of Earth Sciences, IIT Bombay, to build India's first geological storage atlas for coalbed methane-rich coalfields.

The atlas provided layer-by-layer simulation results with experimentally validated inputs for quantifying the potential for geological CO_2 storage in four major coalfields.

The country achieved its first dedicated well, reaching a depth of 1200m in September, for potential CO_2 storage. The drilling site in Pakri Barwadih, in the vicinity of a coal mining area in Jharkhand's Hazaribagh, was completed on November 15.

INDIA BIOGAS EXPANSION

India Now Has 132 Compressed Biogas Plants: Hardeep Singh Puri

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday said that India has made significant progress in strengthening its clean energy ecosystem, with the country now operating 132 compressed biogas (CBG) plants producing a combined 920 tonnes per day (TPD).

In a post on social media platform X, Puri emphasised the transformation of agricultural and organic waste into productive energy resources. "What was once waste is now powering progress. India has 132 Compressed Bio Gas plants producing 920 TPD today, with more capacity coming up under Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT)," he wrote. The SATAT initiative aims to promote compressed biogas as a green and affordable transportation fuel while supporting rural livelihoods and reducing carbon emissions.

The minister said the initiative reflects the government's commitment to sustainability and farmer welfare under the leadership of Narendra Modi.

According to Puri, the conversion of farm residue and organic waste into clean fuel has not only reduced emissions but also generated additional income streams in rural areas.

Highlighting the broader growth of India's household and fuel infrastructure, the minister said the country now has an extensive energy distribution network. "India's household and fuel ecosystem today spans across 33 crore LPG households," he said, noting that this includes 10.35 crore beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana. He added that the government has announced an additional 25 lakh connections, which will take the total number of Ujjwala connections to 10.60 crore.

Puri further stated that India currently has 1.58 crore piped natural gas (PNG) households, reflecting steady progress in providing cleaner cooking fuel to urban and semi-urban homes. The country's transport fuel infrastructure has also expanded rapidly, with 8,428 compressed natural gas (CNG) stations now operational nationwide. In addition, India's gas pipeline network has reached 25,429 kilometres, alongside a steady increase in liquefied natural gas (LNG) capacity to meet rising demand.

SHREYAS IYER
Set for Competitive Return

Shreyas Iyer is set to return to competitive cricket, boosting Mumbai and reviving India's selection debates nationwide attention.

NEW DELHI

India batter Shreyas Iyer is all set to make his return to competitive cricket after a lengthy injury layoff, providing a major boost to Mumbai in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy. The 31-year-old will represent Mumbai against Himachal Pradesh in their upcoming group-stage clash scheduled for January 6 at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur.

Iyer has received conditional clearance from the Board of Control for Cricket in India Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, marking the final step in his rehabilitation process. According to reports, the Mumbai batter spent ten days at the facility undergoing the concluding phase of his recovery. As part of the return-to-play protocol, he featured in a practice match on January 2, where he batted pain-free and completed all fitness and fielding drills without any signs of discomfort, satisfying the medical staff overseeing his comeback.

The right-hander had suffered a serious injury while fielding near the boundary during India's third ODI against Australia in Sydney, when a fall on his rib cage resulted in internal bleeding and damage to his spleen. The injury forced him to miss key domestic assignments, including the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, as well as the subsequent home ODI series, raising concerns about his immediate international future.

Historically, Iyer has been one of Mumbai's most dependable performers in the Vijay Hazare Trophy. Known for his aggressive stroke play and ability to dominate bowling attacks, he has produced several high-impact innings, including a rapid 50-ball century against Karnataka. Last season, he finished as Mumbai's highest run-scorer, amassing 325 runs in just five matches, underlining his importance in the one-day format.

With India's ODI squad for the upcoming New Zealand series set to be announced soon, Iyer's return has added an intriguing dimension to the selection debate.

Indian National Car Racing Championship Reaches Penultimate Round

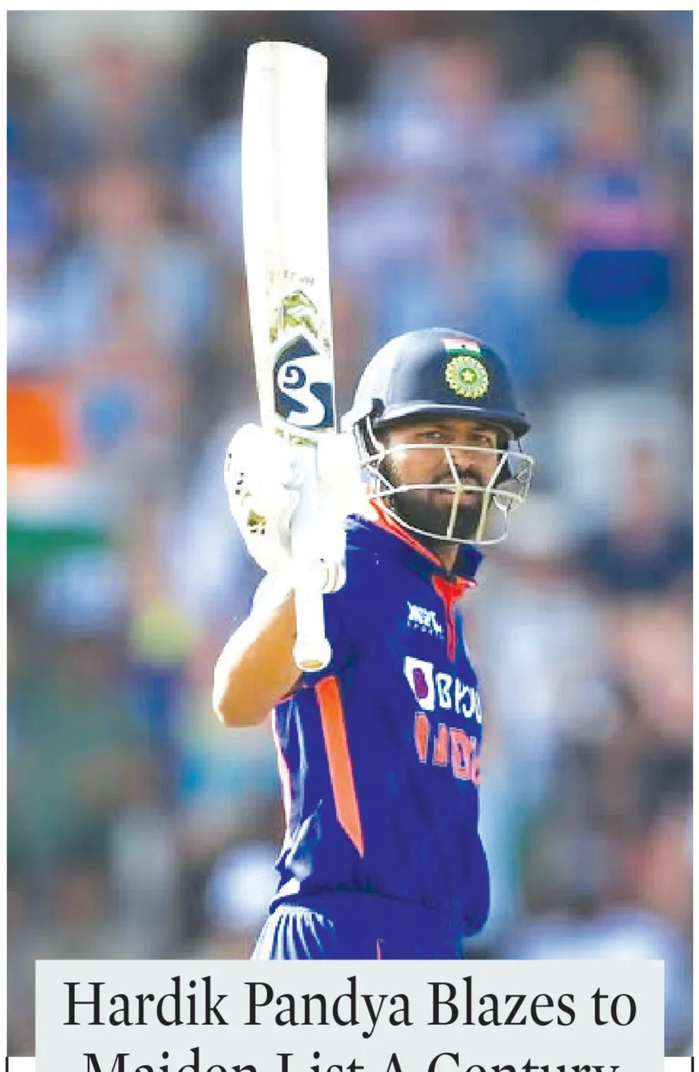
The Indian National Car Racing Championship heads into a decisive penultimate round with multiple title battles intensifying dramatically.

CHENNAI

The MMSC FMSCI Indian National Car Racing Championship 2025 enters its most crucial phase as the third and penultimate round gets underway on January 4 and 5 at the Madras International Circuit. With championship titles still open across all categories, the weekend is expected to witness fierce competition as drivers push hard for vital points.

Originally scheduled for December 6 and 7, the third round had to be postponed following inclement weather conditions caused by Cyclone Ditwah. The revised dates now set the stage for a packed racing card featuring 12 races and as many as 61 entries. The spotlight will firmly be on the two single-seater categories — Formula 2000 and Formula 1600 — which will be run concurrently and boast grids packed with emerging young talent. In the MRF Formula 2000 category, Bengaluru teenager Ishaan Madesh, fresh from clinching the National Karting title, will resume his keen rivalry with Pune's 17-year-old Arjun Chheda. Chheda currently leads the championship, but the margin is razor-thin, with just two points separating the pair. Equally tight is the contest in the MRF Formula 1600 class, where Pune's Sai Shiva Shankaran holds a narrow four-point advantage over Bengalurean Arjun S Nair, setting up an exciting duel over the weekend. The touring car segment, comprising four sub-classes — Indian Touring Cars (ITC), ITC 1625, Indian Junior Touring Cars (IJTC), and Super Stock — along with the MRF Saloons and Formula LGB 1300 categories, also promises high drama. Drivers across these classes will be constantly checking their mirrors as rivals look to close gaps in the standings. In the premier ITC category, former national champion Arjun Balu from Coimbatore leads the standings with a comfortable 29-point cushion. However, local favourite Ritesh Rai remains a major threat after a stunning triple crown in Round 2, despite missing the opening round. Rai currently sits fourth in the championship, behind Dhruv Chavan and defending champion Biren Pithawalla, keeping the title race intriguingly poised. One of the most remarkable stories of the season continues to be that of 80-year-old Vidyaprakash Damodaran from Coimbatore.

Hardik Pandya's explosive maiden List A century powered Baroda's recovery and underlined his red-hot form



Hardik Pandya Blazes to Maiden List A Century

RAJKOT

India's premier all-rounder Hardik Pandya produced a sensational innings to register his maiden List A century, continuing a golden run of form for Baroda against Vidarbha in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy at the Niranjan Shah Stadium on Saturday. Walking in at a precarious 71 for five after 20 overs, Pandya arrived at number seven with Baroda in dire need of stability. He began cautiously, focusing on rebuilding the innings and forging partnerships, before steadily shifting gears. The right-hander reached his half-century in just 44 balls, displaying control and composure amid mounting pressure.

Once set, Pandya unleashed his full repertoire. He needed only 24 additional deliveries to surge from fifty to a breathtaking hundred, bringing up the landmark in just 68 balls. The defining moment of his knock came in the 39th over, when he tore into the Vidarbha attack for 34 runs, hammering five towering sixes and a boundary in a stunning display of power-hitting. Pandya eventually departed for a commanding 133 off 92 balls, an innings studded with 11 sixes and eight fours.

Courtesy of Pandya's charismatic effort, Baroda recovered strongly to post a competitive 293 for nine in their allotted 50 overs. The rest of the batting line-up, however, struggled to get going, with no other batter able to cross the 30-run mark against a disciplined Vidarbha bowling unit. Vidarbha's resistance was led by Yash Thakur, who claimed a four-wicket haul, while Nachiket Bhute and Parth Rekhade provided able support with two wickets apiece. Despite their efforts, Pandya's assault ensured Baroda had a fighting total on the board.

Notably, this was Pandya's first appearance for Baroda this season. Overall, he has now featured in 119 List A matches, including 94 ODIs for India, eight games for India A, and 17 for Baroda. Across the format, Pandya has amassed 2,300 runs and captured 110 wickets, underlining his value as a genuine all-rounder.

KKR Release Mustafizur Rahman Following BCCI Directive

Continued from page 1

The Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) have officially confirmed the release of Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman from their squad ahead of the upcoming Indian Premier League season. The decision follows explicit instructions from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), amid widespread controversy and intense public debate surrounding the player's participation in the tournament. In an official statement, the franchise said that the IPL governing body had directed KKR to release Rahman and that the move was implemented after following due process. The statement further clarified that the BCCI has permitted KKR to sign a replacement player in accordance with IPL regulations, with further details to be announced in due course. The directive underscores the governing body's authority in regulating squad compositions and ensuring that the league operates within its broader administrative framework. Earlier in the day, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia confirmed that the board had instructed the three-time champions to release the left-arm pacer while allowing them to look for a suitable replacement. The confirmation brought an end to days of speculation over Rahman's future with the franchise.

Azizul Hakim to lead Bangladesh squad for U19 World Cup 2026

DHAKA

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Saturday named Azizul Hakim as captain of a strong squad for the upcoming ICC Men's Under-19 World Cup, to be co-hosted by Zimbabwe and Namibia, with Zawad Abrar appointed as his deputy. Bangladesh have banked on experience and current form to select a 15-member squad. The board has also announced eight standby players who can be used in case of injury. The team will begin their campaign against India on January 17. Bangladesh captain Azizul and vice-captain have been in good touch. The duo have scored over 1,000 runs in Youth ODIs since the last U19 World Cup. Kalam Siddiki, with 857 runs in this period, is another batter to watch out for in the team.

Azizul's team also carries an experienced bowling attack, with pacers Iqbal Hossain and Al Fahad expected to get plenty of support in pace-friendly conditions in Zimbabwe. The duo have been the most successful bowlers since the last U19 World Cup, with 45 and 43 wickets to their names respectively.

Bangladesh will need to be at their best in a tough Group B that includes India, New Zealand, and the USA. From the four groups, three teams each will advance to the Super Sixes, followed by the semi-finals and the final.

In all, 16 teams will participate in the 2026 ICC Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup, with 41 matches to be played in the tournament. The 16 teams will be divided into four groups, with the top three teams from each group advancing to the Super Six stage. The fourth-placed teams in Group A and D will face each other, while the fourth-placed teams in Group B and C will face each other in the placement stage.

Defending Champions and Elite Contenders Set for Thrilling Showdown

MUMBAI

The 21st edition of the Mumbai Marathon, a prestigious World Athletics Gold Label event, promises a compelling mix of seasoned champions and emerging talent, underlining the growing depth of Indian distance running. Scheduled for January 18, Asia's premier marathon will once again place the spotlight firmly on domestic athletes, with defending champions Anish Thapa and Nirmaben Thakor leading the charge in the men's and women's elite categories, respectively. The stakes are high, with substantial prize money on offer. The top three finishers in both Indian Elite categories will earn ₹5 lakh, ₹4 lakh, and ₹3 lakh respectively. Adding to the excitement are performance-based incentives, including a ₹2 lakh bonus for breaking the event record and a ₹1 lakh jackpot for setting a new Indian event record.

HIL OPENER CHALLENGE

Soorma Hockey Club Ready to Test Champions Bengal Tigers

CHENNAI

Soorma Hockey Club captain Harmanpreet Singh has expressed strong confidence in his side's readiness as they prepare to face defending champions Bengal Tigers in their opening match of the Hockey India League on Sunday. The fixture promises to be a stern early test for Soorma as they look to set the tone for their campaign against one of the tournament's most formidable teams.

With much of last season's core squad retained, Soorma Hockey Club have focused their pre-season efforts on refinement rather than reconstruction. Training sessions have placed particular emphasis on disciplined defensive structures, managing transitions against top-quality opposition, and improving execution inside the shooting circle. Special attention has also been given to penalty corner conversions, an area the team believes could be decisive in closely fought encounters.

We're calm, we're clear, and we're ready to take on the champions, Harmanpreet Singh said ahead of the match. He underlined the importance of familiarity within the squad, noting that the shared experience of playing together allows the team to stay composed under pressure. According to the skipper, Soorma's approach will revolve around creating sustained pressure, capitalising on scoring opportunities, and making smart decisions in critical moments. He also highlighted the significance of the HIL as a platform to build rhythm and confidence with a demanding international calendar ahead. Head coach Philippe Goldberg echoed the captain's sentiments, stressing that discipline and intent would be key against a side with a proven winning pedigree. Goldberg pointed out that facing the reigning champions requires concentration across all phases of play, from defensive organisation to attacking efficiency. He added that continuity within the squad has instilled belief and clarity, allowing the team to prepare with purpose and confidence rather than uncertainty. As Soorma Hockey Club step into their first fixture of the season, the game plan is straightforward: remain composed, trust the system, and be ready to challenge the champions from the opening whistle.

GIANNIS Seals Thriller as Bucks Edge Hornets

Giannis Antetoko-unmpo delivered a historic night as Milwaukee triumphed, while San Antonio continued Indiana's misery.

WISCONSIN

NBA superstar Giannis Antetokounmpo produced a breathtaking all-round performance to guide the Milwaukee Bucks to a dramatic 122–121 victory over the visiting Charlotte Hornets. Antetokounmpo scored 30 points and capped his outing in emphatic fashion with a game-winning alley-oop dunk that sent the home crowd into raptures.

Along with his scoring, the Bucks forward grabbed 10 rebounds and handed out five assists, achieving a statistical milestone that further cemented his legacy. The performance marked his 158th career game with at least 30 points, 10 rebounds, and five assists — the most in NBA history. In doing so, Antetokounmpo surpassed legends Oscar Robertson and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, with whom he had previously shared the record. Milwaukee received valuable support from Ryan Rollins, who enjoyed a career night with 29 points on an ultra-efficient 11-of-13 shooting while also contributing eight assists. Bobby Portis provided a strong spark off the bench, scoring 20 points as the Bucks claimed their third win in four outings, continuing a positive run of form. For Charlotte, Milwaukee native Kon Knueppel led the scoring with 26 points, while Miles Bridges chipped in with 25. Brandon Miller added 19 points and nearly became the hero for the Hornets, narrowly missing a buzzer-beating shot that would have stolen the game. The narrow defeat extended Charlotte's losing streak to three games.

In another NBA fixture, the San Antonio Spurs defeated the Indiana Pacers 123–113 in Indianapolis, handing the hosts their 11th consecutive loss. De'Aaron Fox led all scorers with 24 points, while Stephon Castle came close to a triple-double, finishing with 19 points, eight rebounds, and eight assists.

Zibanejad Makes Winter CLASSIC HISTORY

MIAMI

Mika Zibanejad starred with a historic hat trick as Rangers dominated Panthers in a memorable Winter Classic.

Mika Zibanejad delivered a night to remember, recording the first-ever hat trick in a Winter Classic and adding two assists as the New York Rangers cruised to a commanding 5–1 victory over the Florida Panthers in Miami.

The historic outdoor game was played before a sellout crowd of 36,153 at loanDepot Park, home of the Miami Marlins, marking another successful showcase for the NHL's marquee outdoor event, the Winter Classic. Zibanejad set the tone early, opening the scoring with a power-play goal at 15:09 of the first period. The tally was his 116th power-play goal for the Rangers, drawing him level with franchise legends Camille Henry and Chris Kreider for the most in team history. Artemi Panarin provided strong support with two goals and an assist, while Alexis Lafrenière enjoyed a standout playmaking night, registering a career-high three assists. Vincent Trocheck chipped in with two assists as well, underlining New York's balanced offensive effort. Between the pipes, Igor Shesterkin was rock solid, turning aside 36 shots to anchor the Rangers' defensive display.

The win snapped a brief three-game skid for New York and further enhanced their impressive record in outdoor games. The Rangers improved to a perfect 6–0–0 all-time in such contests and continue to lead the NHL in road victories this season, boasting a 15–8–2 away record.

For Florida, Sam Reinhart accounted for the lone goal with a power-play strike, while goaltender Sergei Bobrovsky made 15 saves in a losing effort. The Panthers have now dropped two straight games and are 2–3–1 over their last six outings, showing signs of inconsistency after a strong start to the campaign. The night was marred slightly by an injury scare for Florida defenseman Seth Jones, who is expected to represent the United States at the Olympics next month.

SMU Stuns No. 21 Arizona to Claim Holiday Bowl Victory

SAN DIAGO

Quarterback Kevin Jennings delivered a dynamic performance as SMU Mustangs defeated No. 21 Arizona Wildcats 24–19 in the Holiday Bowl, snapping a five-game postseason losing streak and restoring momentum to the program.

Jennings threw for 278 yards, completing 21 of 32 passes, and set the tone early with an electrifying 80-yard completion on a trick razzle-dazzle play on just the second snap from scrimmage. The junior quarterback orchestrated an efficient offense that built a commanding 24–0 halftime lead, proving decisive despite second-half adversity.

The Mustangs capitalised on Jennings' poise and playmaking, as he set up two rushing touchdowns by T.J. Harden and another by Stone Eby. SMU's fast start gave them enough cushion to withstand a turbulent second half in which Jennings threw three interceptions.

Arizona mounted a late comeback behind quarterback Noah Fifita, who threw three touchdown passes to pull the Wildcats back into contention. However, unlike their previous appearance in the Holiday Bowl, the Mustangs held firm and closed out the game to secure the victory. Both teams finished the season with identical 9–4 records.

SMU head coach Rhett Lashlee praised his players for restoring the program's national relevance. These guys brought our program back, Lashlee said. In the last three years, we've won 31 games. Two of those were our first two seasons in the ACC, and we've won more games in the conference than anyone else. They've put us back on the national stage with a College Football Playoff berth and now a Holiday Bowl win.

The victory was particularly significant given SMU's recent postseason struggles, including a heavy 38–10 loss to Penn State Nittany Lions in the opening round of last season's College Football Playoff. This time, the Mustangs showed resilience and composure to finish the job.

For SMU, the Holiday Bowl triumph represents more than just a single win, it signals sustained progress, renewed confidence, and growing stature as the program continues to establish itself among college football's national contenders.

Steve Smith Backs Usman Khawaja to Shine in Farewell Test

SYDNEY

Australia stand-in captain Steve Smith has voiced strong confidence in veteran opener Usman Khawaja, backing him to deliver a memorable performance in his final Test match as Australia face England cricket team at the iconic Sydney Cricket Ground.

The fifth and final Test of the series, scheduled to begin on Sunday, January 4, will mark the end of Khawaja's distinguished Test career after the left-hander announced his retirement from international cricket. The SCG encounter is set to be an emotional affair, with Khawaja stepping onto the field for one last time in the longest format of the game, in front of home supporters.

Speaking ahead of the match, Smith reflected on his long association with Khawaja, having shared the field with him since their junior cricket days. The stand-in skipper praised Khawaja's resilience, experience, and calm presence at the top of the order, qualities that have defined his career and made him a key figure in Australia's red-ball setup over the years.

Usman has always been someone who thrives on big occasions, Smith said. I've known him since we were kids coming through the system together, and he's grown into a player who understands his game exceptionally well. I think he'll really enjoy the moment and play the way he knows best.

Robby Ashford leads Wake Forest past Mississippi State 43-29

CHARLOTTE

Robby Ashford couldn't have imagined a better way to close out his roller-coaster college career. The six-year redshirt senior quarterback threw for 303 yards and three touchdowns and ran for 50 yards and two scores to take MVP honors, Koredell Bartley scored on a 100-yard kickoff return and Wake Forest beat Mississippi State 43-29 in the Duke's Mayo Bowl. Ashford, who arrived at Wake Forest this season eager for a chance to start, threw TD passes of 14 yards to Kamrean Johnson, 64 yards to Jack Foley and 62 yards to Ty Clark III and had scoring runs of 2 and 1 yards for the Demon Deacons (9-4). Wake Forest finished the season winning seven of its final nine games, this one sending coach Jake Dickert to a celebratory mayonnaise bath. When I got to Wake Forest, I was in a rough spot mentally and physically, said Ashford, who transferred from South Carolina after also spending time at Oregon and Auburn.

Shubman Gill's Vijay Hazare Trophy Return Delayed After Food Poisoning Scare

JAIPUR

India's ODI and Test captain Shubman Gill has seen his return to competitive action in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy delayed after he was forced to miss Punjab's fifth-round clash against Sikkim on Saturday due to food poisoning, according to ESPNcricinfo. Gill arrived in Jaipur on afternoon and was expected to take the field for Punjab in the group-stage encounter.

However, after feeling unwell overnight, the star batter was rested following consultations between the medical team and management. The decision was taken as a precautionary measure, with an eye firmly on his availability for the upcoming ODI series against New Zealand, which begins on January 11 in Vadodara and is expected to see Gill leading the side.

Gill didn't feel well at night and was advised to rest by the doctors.

He is, however, understood to be recovering well and is likely to play in the sixth round on January 6 against Goa, before linking up with the ODI squad, a team source told ESPNcricinfo. India's ODI squad for the New Zealand series is set to be announced over the weekend.

The latest setback adds to a challenging few months for Gill, who has struggled with injuries across formats.

Last year, he faced a neck injury after surviving just three balls in the first Test against South Africa in Kolkata, which ruled him out of the remainder of the series. During his absence, Rishabh Pant led India in the second Test.

Gill later sustained a toe injury in the T20I series against South Africa and was eventually left out of India's squad for the T20 World Cup.

Iga Swiatek Dismisses Modern Battle of the Sexes

PARIS

Six-time Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek has said she sees little purpose in reviving the concept of a modern-day Battle of the Sexes, asserting that women's tennis no longer needs comparison or validation against the men's game.

Speaking in Sydney ahead of her season-opening appearance at the United Cup, Swiatek was responding to the highly publicised exhibition match staged in Dubai last week between world number one Aryna Sabalenka and Australian showman Nick Kyrgios. Kyrgios won the encounter 6-3, 6-3, with Sabalenka's side of the court reduced by nine percent in an effort to offset his physical advantages.

Swiatek made it clear she had not watched the match and felt it carried little significance beyond entertainment value. I think for sure it attracted a lot of attention. It was entertainment, but I wouldn't say that had anything to do with social change or any important topics, she said. According to the Polish star, the only real connection to the original Battle of the Sexes was the name itself. She drew a clear distinction between the modern exhibition and the iconic 1973 contest between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs, which had profound social and sporting implications. At that time, women's professional tennis was still fighting for recognition, equality, and financial stability, with King at the forefront of the movement.

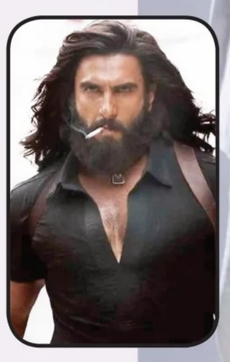
Back then, there was more at stake, Swiatek noted, adding that women's tennis today is firmly established on its own merits. We have so many great athletes and great stories to present. We don't necessarily need to compare to men's tennis. Honestly, there doesn't need to be any competition.

Swiatek, currently the world number two and preparing for the Australian Open later this month the only major title missing from her collection also praised the United Cup format as a healthier way to celebrate the sport.

Shivarajkumar

Praises Ranveer Singh's Subtle Performance In Dhurandhar Film

South actor Shivarajkumar praised Bollywood star Ranveer Singh for his subtle performance in the film Dhurandhar during a recent press meet. He spoke while addressing the success press conference of his upcoming film 45 and shared his views on the much talked about multi-starrer Dhurandhar, directed by Aditya Dhar. Shivarajkumar said the film was emotionally strong and appreciated the overall making and performances. He especially highlighted the work of Akshaye Khanna and Ranveer Singh, calling both actors outstanding in their respective roles.



According to him, every actor in the film delivered a powerful performance that added depth to the story. Speaking about the lead actors, Shivarajkumar said he enjoyed Akshaye Khanna's role, which allowed the actor to explore different shades of his character. However, he felt Ranveer Singh's role was more challenging as it demanded great control and subtlety.

He said pulling off such a restrained performance is not easy, but Ranveer handled it with great skill and grace. The senior actor also spoke about the importance of multi-starrer films in today's cinema. He said ensemble projects are the need of the hour as they bring together varied talents and allow audiences to see diverse performances on screen. In another update, Dhurandhar has been declared tax-free in Ladakh. Lieutenant Governor Kavinder Gupta announced the decision on X, saying the film was shot extensively in the region and showcased Ladakh's landscapes.

Divine Dancers Protest Koragajja Reels

Film teams often try many ways to draw crowds. Promotions include college visits, road shows, and unusual publicity ideas. Offering prizes has also been used for years to attract viewers. In the past, moviegoers were rewarded for answering questions or buying cassettes. The makers of the upcoming film Koragajja have now announced a similar offer, but it has sparked strong anger.

The Koragajja team has promised a cash prize of one crore rupees to people who make and share reels using songs from the film. According to the announcement, selected reels will be chosen by the film team and rewarded. The offer was shared along with the release of the film's songs, directed by Sudheer Attavar.

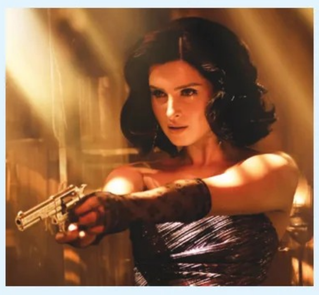
However, divine dancers from Kodagu and nearby regions have strongly opposed the move. They say Koragajja is a highly respected deity of Tulunadu and should not be used for online contests based on likes or views. After the release of Kantara, several people dressed as deities and made casual reels, which earlier drew criticism for insulting sacred traditions.

In this background, the one crore reels contest has been called unacceptable and hurtful. Members of the deity worshippers and divine dancers' association warned that continuing such promotions could damage faith and cultural values.

They also stated that if the mistake is not corrected, they may seek divine punishment and take legal action.

Koragajja is preparing for release, but the dispute has sparked debate about respecting faith, tradition, and belief in film promotions nationwide today.

TARA SUTARIA REVEALED AS REBECCA IN YASH'S TOXIC FILM



The makers of actor Yash's upcoming film Toxic have started revealing characters one by one, creating steady excitement among fans across regions. As part of the latest promotion, the team unveiled the character Rebecca, played by actress Tara Sutaria. A new poster showing her look was released online, adding to the growing curiosity around the film ahead of its worldwide release on March 19.

Earlier, the production team introduced other major characters through first look posters. These included Kiara Advani as Nadia, Huma Qureshi as Elizabeth, and Nayanthara as Ganga. Each reveal drew strong reactions on social media, with fans sharing opinions, theories, and expectations. The makers have chosen to keep the story details secret, allowing the characters to drive interest and discussion. Toxic is directed by Geethu Mohandas and marks her first collaboration with Yash. The film is being produced on a large scale and is planned as a global release. According to the team, careful planning and steady promotion are key parts of the project's strategy. Industry sources say the film aims to balance style, emotion, and strong performances.

The slow and planned release of posters has helped maintain buzz over several weeks.

Silent Film 'Gandhi Talks' Set For January Release

Actors Vijay Sethupathi, Arvind Swamy and Aditi Rao Hydari are ready to present a bold experiment in cinema with their upcoming silent film Gandhi Talks, releasing on January 30. Directed by Kishore Belekar, the film aims to revive the essence of pure performance and emotion, without spoken words.

Belekar explained that the project is about trusting silence and returning to the roots of storytelling. The cast embraced this challenge, relying on expressions and gestures to convey meaning. Adding depth to the film is A.R. Rahman's music, which serves as its voice and emotional guide. With support from Zee Studios and Meera Chopra, the team has created what they call an honest and daring piece of cinema.

Rajinikanth's 'Thalaivar 173' Gets New Director, Pongal Release

Superstar Rajinikanth's next big project, Thalaivar 173, has officially locked its director. Filmmaker Cibi Chakravarti, best known for his 2022 hit Don, has come on board to helm the highly anticipated film, which is backed by Kamal Haasan. The makers confirmed that the movie will hit theatres during Pongal 2027, a festive season known for major Tamil releases.

The announcement was made on January 3 through a striking poster featuring scissors forming a star, along with threads and cloth, symbolizing the film's theme. The poster also revealed that Anirudh Ravichander will compose the music. Sharing the update, Kamal Haasan posted a video montage and wrote, Celebrations begin, signaling the start of the journey.

The project had earlier faced delays after director Sundar C exited due to creative differences. His departure left the film in uncertainty, but producers now express confidence in Chakravarti's vision and ability to deliver a film worthy of Rajinikanth's stature. Thalaivar 173 is expected to be a landmark release, not only because of Rajinikanth's involvement but also due to the collaboration between industry giants. Fans are eagerly awaiting details about the storyline, which remain under wraps. On the work front, Rajinikanth was last seen in Lokesh Kanagaraj's Coolie, a blockbuster success, and is currently filming Jailer 2. With Chakravarti at the helm and Anirudh's music, Thalaivar 173 is shaping up to be one of the most talked-about films of 2027.

Sidharth Malhotra May Join Hands With Rajkumar Santoshi

Bollywood star Sidharth Malhotra is preparing for his next big film, and reports suggest he may team up with veteran filmmaker Rajkumar Santoshi. While no official announcement has been made yet, sources say talks are in advanced stages.

The project is being backed by producer Mahavir Jain, though details remain secret. If confirmed, this will be the first time Malhotra and Santoshi work together. Industry insiders believe Santoshi is the perfect choice, given his wide range of successful films. He has directed hard-hitting dramas like Ghayal, Damini, Ghatak and Khakee, as well as comedy classics such as Andaz Apna Apna and Ajab Prem Ki Ghazab Kahani. His ability to balance entertainment with strong storytelling is said to match the film's vision.

Earlier, Raaj Shaandilyaa was reportedly considered to direct, but the makers now seem more inclined towards Santoshi. Pre-production is moving quickly, and a senior actor may also join the cast for an important role.

The film, written by Sanjeev, is expected to mix comedy with suspense. Sources reveal that Malhotra was excited by the fresh character he will portray, and he is already preparing extensively for the role.

Meanwhile, Santoshi is busy with Lahore 1947, featuring Sunny Deol, Preity Zinta, Shabana Azmi and Ali Fazal. This marks another collaboration between Santoshi and Deol after their earlier hits. On his part, Sidharth Malhotra will next appear in One: Force of the Forest with Tamannaah Bhatia, scheduled for release in May.

Bhagyashri Borse Joins Akhil Akkineni In 'Lenin' Drama

Actress Bhagyashri Borse has officially stepped in as the female lead for Akhil Akkineni's upcoming film Lenin. Her first look as Bharathi was unveiled by the makers, showing her in a saree with earrings and a marigold flower thread, smiling subtly. The film's first single is set to release on January 5, with the movie scheduled for a Summer 2026 theatrical release.

Directed by Murali Kishor Abburu, Lenin is expected to be a village romance drama. The project had earlier faced changes when actress Sreeleela, initially cast as the female lead, exited due to scheduling conflicts. Reports suggest she had already shot a few scenes before her departure, which briefly disrupted production.

The announcement of Bhagyashri's role was made on social media, with the makers writing, Vareva vareva.. vavva vavva vareva...Introducing bhagyashriiborse from LENIN. First Single from JAN 5th. Alongside her reveal, a new poster featuring Akhil Akkineni was also shared, confirming the film's release timeline.

Akhil himself posted the update, wishing fans a happy new year and promising that 2026 would be memorable. Music for the film is composed by Thaman, who also teased the upcoming single. Bhagyashri Borse, who was last seen in the period thriller Kaantha, has earned praise for her performances in films like Andhra King Taluka and Kingdom. Her addition to Lenin has raised expectations, with fans eager to see her chemistry with Akhil in this rural romance.

Nivin Pauly, Mamitha Baiju Begin Shoot For 'Bethlehem Kudumba Unit'

Malayalam cinema welcomed the New Year with the launch of Bethlehem Kudumba Unit, a romantic comedy directed by Girish AD. The film stars Nivin Pauly and Mamitha Baiju in lead roles and officially went on floors Friday with a traditional pooja ceremony.

Bhavana Studios, which earlier backed Girish AD's blockbuster Premalu, shared photos from the ceremony on social media, writing: Bhavana Studios kicks off the New Year with the production of Bethlehem Kudumba Unit, a Rom Com by Girish AD, starring Nivin Pauly and Mamitha Baiju. Wishing you all a year filled with Love, Laughter and Happiness.

For Mamitha Baiju, this project marks a return to Malayalam cinema after gaining pan-Indian attention. It is also her third collaboration with Girish AD following Super Sharanya and Premalu. Alongside Nivin and Mamitha, actor Sangeeth Prathap plays a key role, continuing his association with the director. The supporting cast includes Suresh Krishna, Bindu Panicker, Vinay Fort, Roshan Shanavas, Srinda, Shyam Mohan, and Shameer Khan.

The film reunites Girish AD with his Premalu co-writer Kiran Josey. The technical team also returns, with music by Vishnu Vijay, cinematography by Ajmal Sabu, editing by Akash Joseph Varghese, lyrics by Vinayak Sasikumar, and art direction by Aashiq S. Costumes and make-up are managed by Dhanya Balakrishnan and Ronex Xavier.

City Hilights (English Daily) published by P. Sunil Kumar (Publisher) on behalf of Immaculate Broadcasting Consortium World News (P) Ltd., No. 18, JRV Court, Queens's Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and printed at Manipal Media Network Limited Opp. Govt School, Kempalinganahalli, Near Kunigal Cross, Nelamangala TQ, Bangalore Rural Dist. -562123, Printed at No-7/2 plot no.CA-3/1,28(p)&29(p) Kapanoor 2nd Stage Industrial Area Kapnoor Village Kalaburagi -585104. Printed at S. J. R. V. Printers, No. 208 Plot No. B-019 KSSIDC Industrial Area, Irfan Ahamed Khan Pathan, 4th Main Road Gamanagatti, Hubballi-Dharwad – 580025. and Elegant Offset Printers Pvt. Ltd. No. 5-61/1, Shed No. M-6, Yeyyadi Industrial Estate, Yeyyadi, Mangalore - 575 008. (RNI No: KARENG / 2015 / 63243), Regd. No. BGGPO-2581/2017-2019 Posted at Bengaluru PSO-560026 Email - cityhilights.news@gmail.com Phone: 080-41209042. Copyright. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.